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ABSTRACT

This report provides findings of an in-person survey of single parents in Ramsey County, Minnesota. The report is organized into seven chapters. Chapter 1 provides a current demographic, educational, and economic profile of single parents and examines whether the backgrounds of single parents relate to their present conditions. Chapter 2 describes the occupational characteristics of single mothers in the labor force, the work potential of unemployed single mothers and those receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), and the ability of single mothers to achieve financial self-sufficiency. Chapter 3 assesses the financial and household circumstances of single parents. Chapter 4 examines the school performance, problems, and relationships with parents of children living in single parent families. Chapter 5 describes the physical health, mental health, and social adjustment of single parents. Chapter 6 summarizes major findings, focusing on the issues that relate to policies, plans, and programs. Chapter 7 uses data from a supplemental sample of single fathers to take a closer look at their current status, child-rearing, child care arrangements, physical and mental health, and interpersonal relationships. Appended are information on obtaining summary reports, a list of members of the study advisory committee, a program of a related needs assessment conference, and supplementary statistical tables. (KH)

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SINGLE PARENT FAMILIES

A NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY OF SINGLE PARENTS

RAMSEY COUNTY, MINNESOTA

ED 273 695

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SINGLE PARENT FAMILIES

A NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY OF SINGLE PARENTS RAMSEY COUNTY, MINNESOTA

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December, 1985

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PREFACE

This report provides an in-depth look at the methods, findings, and conclusions of an in-person survey of single parents in Ramsey County. The objective of this study is to document the characteristics, living conditions, and needs of all types of single parent families as accurately as possible so that a reliable base of information can be available for local human service planners, funders, providers, and policymakers. Highlights from the study have appeared previously in a series of short reports. (The titles of those short reports and ordering information are contained in Appendix A.)

The findings from the survey of single parents are organized into five topic areas. Chapter One provides a current demographic, educational, and economic profile of single parents and examines whether the backgrounds of single parents relate to their present conditions. Chapter Two describes the occupational characteristics of single mothers in the labor force, the work potential of single mothers who are out of the labor force and on AFDC, and the ability of single mothers to achieve financial self-sufficiency. Chapter Three assesses the financial and household circumstances of single parents. It includes information about their sources of income, housing and housing costs, child care arrangements, their ability to provide their families with material necessities, transportation, and legal concerns. Chapter Four focuses on the children living in single parent families. It examines their school performance, their learning, emotional, behavioral, and physical problems, and their relationship with their parents and absent parents. It also reveals how these items relate to the family characteristics and circumstances of single mothers. Chapter Five describes the physical health, mental health, and social adjustment of single parents. It notes the number of single parents who report having problems, describing the types of problems and the characteristics of the single parents who have them. It also examines their satisfaction with life as single persons and their support group involvement. Chapter Six draws together the highlights from Chapters One through Five, focusing on the issues

that stand out as central to the policies, plans, and programs that affect single parent families.

Chapter Seven uses data from a supplemental sample of single fathers to take a closer look at their current status, child-rearing, child care arrangements, physical and mental health, and interpersonal relationships.

This report represents the dedicated and thoughtful work of a great many people. A special thank-you goes to the members of the Single Parent Family Study Advisory Committee. (Their names and affiliations can be found in Appendix B.) The advisory committee offered useful recommendations, criticisms, encouragement, and praise throughout the project. We relied on them to help make this report meet the informational needs of local human service organizations.

For courage, thoroughness, and long miles in the field and for delivering high quality interviews in large quantities we commend the following canvassers/interviewers: Gabe Horner, Jeni Mitchell, Michael Gall, Jon Wiersma, Anne Kollmeyer, Jennie Adams, Marty Markus, Carol Dalziel, Jane Breckenridge, and Addie Page.

An all-day conference was held in June to present and discuss the results from the Single Parent Family Study. (The conference program, including a description of panelists, appears in Appendix C.) The conference panelists receive our thanks for their contributions to a successful conference as well as for their insights on the study findings that became incorporated in the conclusions of this final report.

Thanks are also due to current and past members of our office. Dr. Paul Mattessich, Director of the Office of Research and Statistics, contributed a watchful eye during all phases of the study and provided useful commentary on the drafts of this report. Deb Wodke showed supreme dedication to contacting hard-to-reach respondents and to eagerly conducting interviews whenever duty called. Lisa Floden, Lynn Kipke, Jan Nitti, and Carol Ohmann pitched in and gave essential help preparing conference materials and other mailings. Dianne DeRoma, Nanci Hurlbut, Dan Peterson, Frank Popplewell, and Mary Lue Tillman performed their data and word processing tasks with vigor. Finally, Kim Smith ably prepared the countless drafts and correspondences that culminated in this final report.

We gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the Wilder Foundation and The Saint Paul Foundation for making our survey research possible. Most

importantly, our thanks and appreciation go out to the single parents in this survey. Their responses are the nuts and bolts of this whole enterprise.

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St. Paul, Minnesota
August, 1985

INTRODUCTION AND SURVEY METHODS

THE GROWTH OF SINGLE PARENT FAMILIES

The relatively large and growing number of single parent families has been widely documented and publicized (Bane, 1976; Glick and Norton, 1977; Ross and Sawhill, 1975; U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1982A; Wattenberg and Reinhardt, 1979; Weiss, 1979). In 1980, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, 20 percent of the families with dependent children in the United States were single parent families, representing an 89 percent increase in the number of single parent families since 1970 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1984). The most important factor in this increase was the rising divorce rate. From 1970 to 1980, for example, the annual divorce rate per 1,000 married women in the United States increased from 14.9 to 22.8 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1984). In recent years, unmarried parenthood has also become an important factor in the increase in single parent families. Nationwide, for example, from 1970 to 1982, the proportion of children being raised by never married single parents increased from slightly more than 6 percent of the total number of children living with single parents to slightly more than 20 percent (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1984).

Ramsey County contained 12,180 single parent families in 1980, representing 21 percent of all families with dependent children, an increase of 67 percent in the number of single parent families since 1970 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1971 and 1982B). Single mothers headed 88 percent of those one parent families. The proportion of racial minority families with children under age 18 that are single parent families is much higher than among White families with children under age 18 -- 40 percent for racial minorities compared with 19 percent for Whites in Ramsey County. However, despite the greater prevalence among racial minorities, about 83 percent of single parent families in Ramsey County were maintained by White single parents in 1980.

THE GROWTH OF CONCERN ABOUT SINGLE PARENT FAMILIES

Public awareness and concern about single parent families and the conditions in which children are being raised has grown in the past several years. Finding ways to improve the plight of many single parents, especially single mothers living in poverty, welfare dependence, and isolation, has been a large part of the concern (Cassetty, 1978; Ehrenreich and Stallard, 1982; Pearce and McAdoo, 1981; van Houten et al., 1982). Attempting to reduce the incidence of one parent families, viewed as potentially detrimental to the emotional and social well-being of children, has also been part of the response to the increase in single parent families (Kramer, 1983; Sussman, 1978). For the most part, the focus of social science research has been on the disadvantaged economic status and problems of single mothers, particularly divorced mothers (Bane and Weiss, 1980; Espenshade, 1979; Schlesinger, 1979-80; Weiss, 1979 and 1984).

PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY

In 1983, Amherst H. Wilder Foundation's Office of Research and Statistics, with the financial assistance of The Saint Paul Foundation, initiated a study of single parent families in Ramsey County. This study, too, grew out of the increased visibility of single parent families and out of the concern, for example, that children living in economically stressed single parent families are more likely to be at risk for social, emotional, and health problems. The objective of this study is to document the characteristics, living conditions, and needs of all types of single parent families as accurately as possible so that a reliable base of information can be available for local human service planners, funders, providers and policymakers. It seeks to examine the differences as well as the similarities among single parent families and to understand the strengths as well as the weaknesses among them. The study makes no value judgments or assumptions about the lifestyles of single parents or the backgrounds of single parent families.

In order to achieve the study's objectives, an in-person survey of 421 single parents in Ramsey County was conducted from March through August, 1984. Information was obtained from respondents about problems and needs in their major roles as parent, head of household, worker, and single adult, including information about their children and child-rearing, housing, finances, education, employment, mental health, and romantic involvement. Surveys of 63

additional single fathers were also conducted to supplement the general population survey of single parents.

WHAT IS A SINGLE PARENT?

To be eligible for this study, respondents had to meet three criteria:

1. They had to live at least half the time with at least one child age 17 or younger.
2. They had to be either divorced, separated (legally or otherwise), widowed, or never married parents for at least 12 months. In addition, they could not be married persons whose spouses were absent for reasons other than marital separation (e.g., for military, educational, medical, or business reasons).
3. Respondents could not be cohabiting.¹

Precise information on the number of single parents, using this definition, cannot be obtained from the U.S. Census. The U.S. Census gives only a rough estimate of the number of single parent households and does not take into account the number of single parents within the household or the length of time a person has been a single parent.²

¹ Note that single parents could live with other adult individuals or families and still be eligible for this study. Also, they did not have to be heads of households; another adult in the household could be the formally designated "head."

² The 1980 census collected information on the number of households and the persons within them. People were asked to list one of the persons in whose name the housing unit was owned or rented as the householder and to list the rest of the individuals in the household and their relationship to the householder. In census reports, then, one can find the number of households and the number of families (households with two or more related persons). Reports also indicate the number of female or male-headed families in which there was no spouse present and in which there were related children under age 18. This figure is frequently cited as the number of single parent families; however, this figure excludes some single parents and counts others as single parents who are not. For instance, two women sharing a house, each with a child, would be counted as one female-headed family by the census, not two. On the other hand, a widow (listed as a householder) who shares her home with her son, his wife and their child would be included as a female householder with no spouse and a related child under 18 (her grandchild). One should also note that the census reports the status of individuals as of the date the form was filled out. In households in which the spouse is absent, that person could have been gone for one day or twenty years.

SAMPLING DESIGN

Aims of the Sampling Design

The aims in developing a sampling strategy were to obtain as representative and as large a sample of Ramsey County single parent families as possible within the constraints of time, budget, and study objectives. The more representative or unbiased the sample, the more appropriately and confidently results from the sample could be generalized to the total population of single parent families in Ramsey County. The larger the sample, assuming representativeness, the more accurately the data from the sample would estimate the true population values. A large sample also makes possible separate and comparative analyses involving subgroups of the sample. With a sufficiently large sample it would be possible to compare, for example, families with older children versus families with younger children, White versus Black families, and never married versus divorced single parents.

Sample Selection: General Survey

Since single parent households made up only about 8 percent of all households in the county, according to the 1980 census, the sampling design for this study involved multi-stage probability sampling techniques with some adjustments to make the data collection more feasible. The sampling design first divided Ramsey County into twelve geographical areas. See **Figure A**. Each area represented a health planning area or group of health planning areas in which there were approximately 1,000 single parent households based on the 1980 census. See **Table A**.

Next, within each area, two census tracts to be canvassed for survey respondents were selected. To improve canvassing efficiency, the tract with the highest proportion of single parent households (based on 1980 census figures) in each area was the first tract selected. The second tract selected within each area was randomly chosen. The proportions of single parent households per census tract varied from over 27 percent to less than 2 percent.

The study sample included 24 of the 129 census tracts in the county. See **Figure B**. Within each of the 24 selected census tracts, blocks were selected using random selection procedures. Trained canvassers determined the composition of every housing unit on selected blocks, beginning with the first block selected. All single parents, as previously defined, on the selected

Figure A: Ramsey County: Twelve Areas For Sampling Purposes

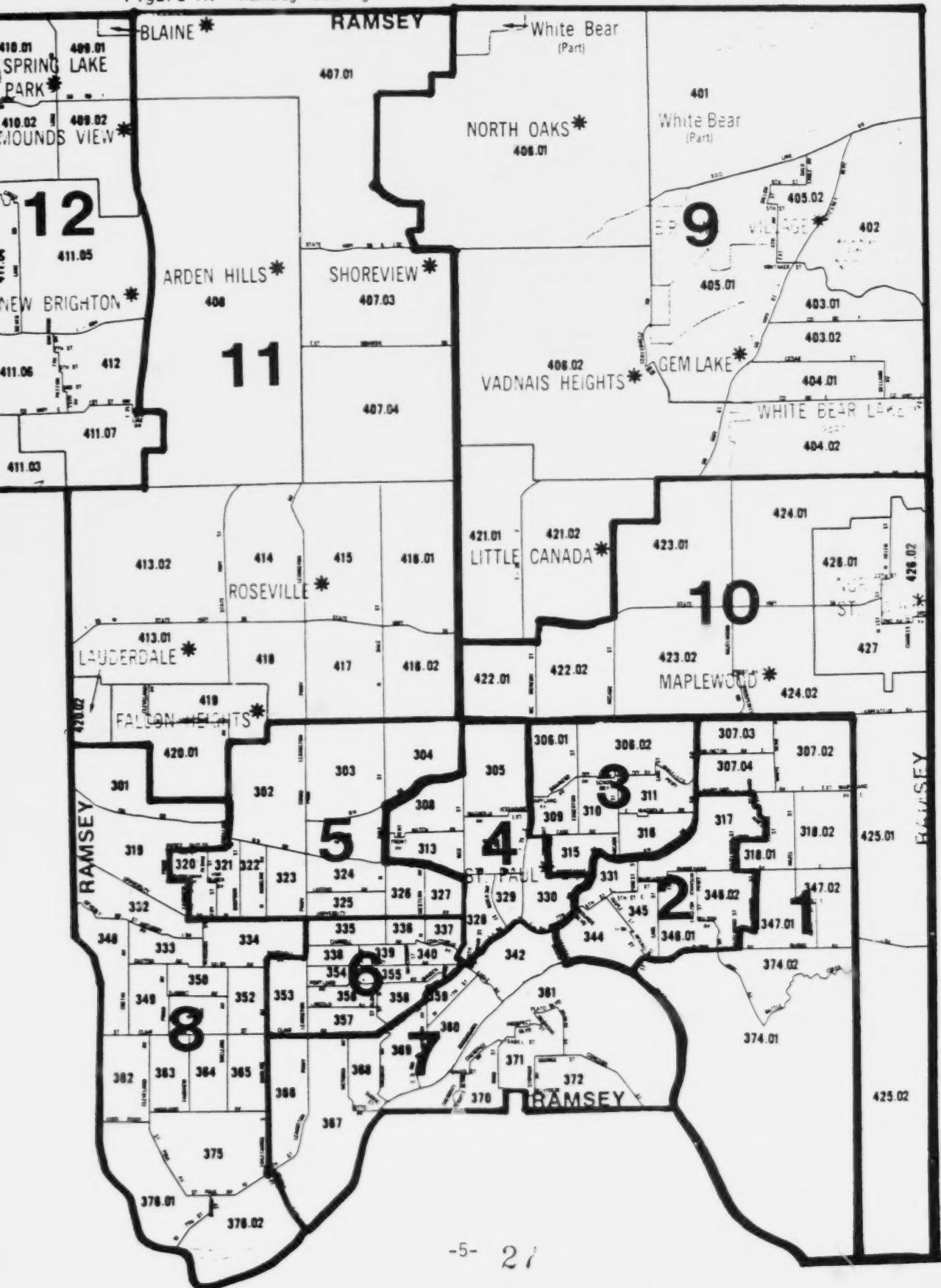
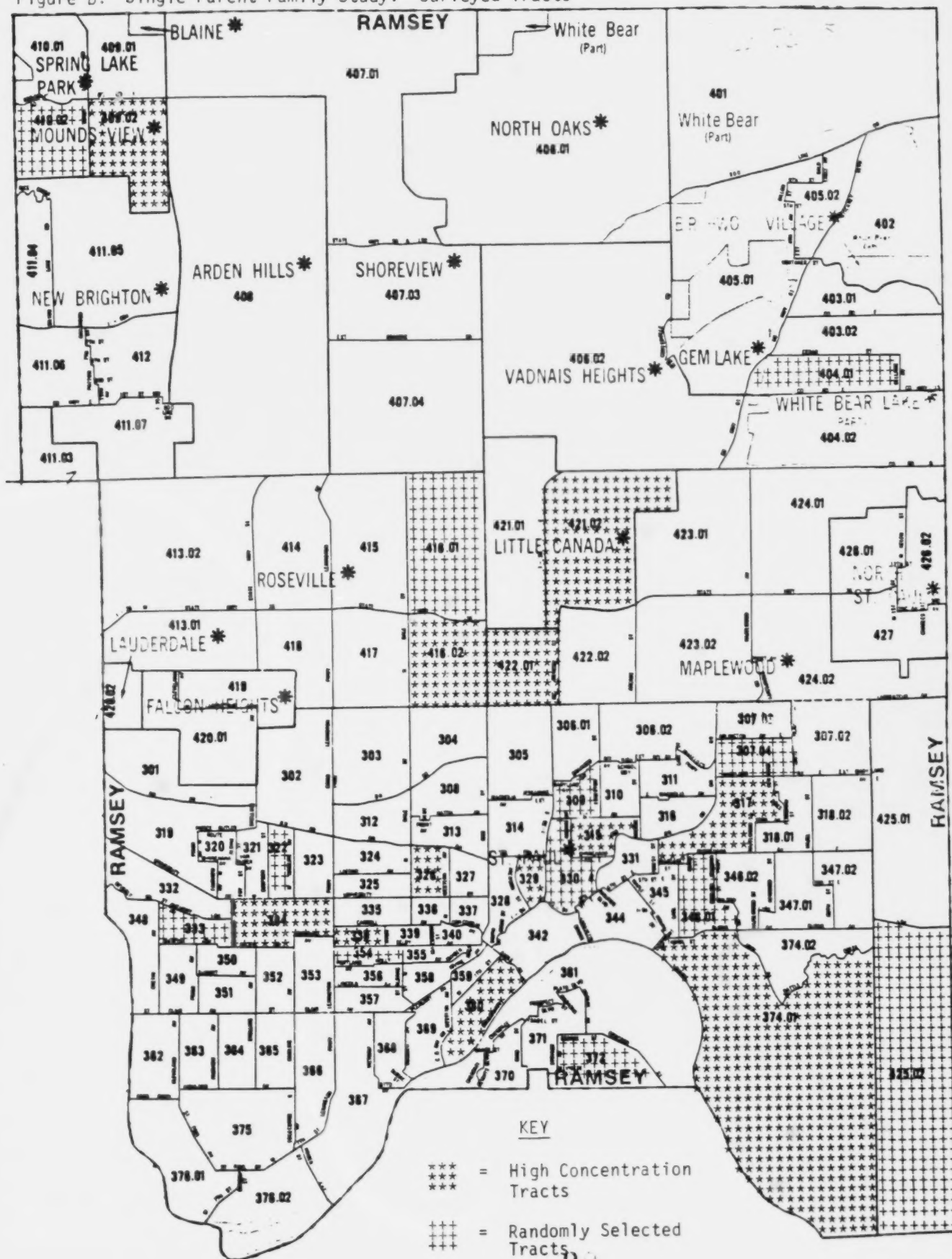


Table A: Sampling Areas of Ramsey County for Single Parent Family Study
(Based upon Health Planning Areas): 1980 Census*

<u>AREAS</u>	<u>CONTENTS</u> <u>St. Paul</u>	Number of Single Parent Households (1980)	Number of Households with Children (1980)
1	East Side	1,179	5,385
2	Dayton's Bluff	1,084	3,179
3	Payne - Phalen	874	3,325
4	North End - Mt. Airy	1,091	2,664
5	Como, Hamline - Midway, Thomas - Dale	1,129	4,889
6	Summit - University	1,194	2,957
7	Downtown, West Side, West 7th	1,129	4,004
8	Western St. Paul (St. Anthony, Merriam, Mac, Highland)	1,115	6,289
	TOTAL	8,795	32,692
	<u>Suburbs</u>		
9	White Bear, North Oaks, Vadnais Heights, Little Canada	984	7,096
10	Maplewood, North St. Paul	1,035	6,107
11	Roseville, Arden Hills, Shoreview, Falcon Heights, Lauderdale	1,125	9,338
12	Moundsview, New Brighton, St. Anthony	1,024	6,128
	TOTAL	4,168	28,669
	GRAND TOTAL	12,963	61,361

* Based on total population (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1981)

Figure B: Single Parent Family Study: Surveyed Tracts



blocks were asked to participate in the survey. Canvassing proceeded on as many blocks as necessary to survey 3.25 percent of the single parent households in each area, ranging from 9 to 27 interviews per census tract. Over the 24 census tracts in the 12 areas, this design gave us a general community survey sample of 421 single parents.

Approximately the same number of housing units were canvassed in each of the two census tracts within an area. Hence, the proportion that each of these two tracts contributed to the total number of single parents surveyed in the area depended on the proportion of single parent households in each tract.

We wanted to be certain that the sample of single parents was as representative as possible and did not omit people who were difficult to reach because of their work schedules or who were hesitant to participate because they felt too busy to spend an hour or so of their time being interviewed. We also wanted to be certain that the sample included persons who do not readily participate in community activities and not just persons who are civic-minded and readily speak their minds. Accordingly, canvassers went through a number of steps to contact potential respondents. They dropped by at different times of the day and week and left messages with telephone numbers asking people to call them. They asked neighbors for information, including telephone numbers, so that the likelihood of establishing contact would be increased. When language barriers arose, canvassers used Hmong, Cambodian, Vietnamese, and Spanish-speaking interpreters to make contact.

Canvassers were advised to conduct interviews at the initial contact of eligible persons and, if that was not possible, to schedule an interview at the earliest convenient time for the person to be interviewed. Canvassers who were unable to make those scheduled appointments contacted their supervisor, who assigned another trained interviewer to conduct the interview.

Persons who did not keep scheduled appointments to be interviewed as well as persons who were identified as eligible for the survey but who would neither agree to participate nor give a firm refusal to participate were contacted at least twice more, once by the original canvasser and once again by a different canvasser. We were able to convince many of these people about the importance of the survey and completed interviews with them. Attempts to reach incomplete contacts were undertaken a minimum of three times but, in practice, were undertaken until it was clear that no contact was possible within the time constraints of the survey.

Sample Selection: Supplemental Sample of Single Fathers

Because only a small proportion of single parent families in Ramsey County were headed by men, we needed to increase the size of that sample so that we could do separate and comparative analyses. The supplemental sample of single fathers was obtained by contacting organizations or groups attended by single fathers, through professional contacts, through referrals from other single parents in the community survey, and by issuing press releases asking for volunteers to contact us. These recruitment efforts added 63 single fathers to the study.

SURVEY RESPONSE RATE

The 421 community interviews were obtained after canvassing 8,728 households on 299 blocks. Of those total households, 550 contained eligible respondents. The 421 interviews represent a 77 percent response rate. That is, of those eligible to participate, 77 completed the interview, 20 percent refused to participate, and 3 percent could not be contacted.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS AND REPRESENTATIVENESS OF THE GENERAL SAMPLE

To help judge the representativeness of the Single Parent Family Study sample, the 1980 Census for Ramsey County can be used as a guide, keeping in mind that some differences are likely because of the intervening years between the two samples as well as because of the variance in the definition of single parents in each sample. The most notable differences in definition between the two samples are 1) the requirement that single parents have to have been single parents for at least a year to be eligible for this survey, while the census does not take into account the length of time that a respondent has been a single parent; and 2) this study collected information from all individuals in a household who fit the eligibility criteria described on page 3, while the census collected information on only those who were designated as the "head" of the household.

Table B presents the demographic breakdown for the study sample and the 1980 Census sample. A comparison of the various distributions of the two samples found that sex, age, age of the youngest child, and educational attainment did not significantly differ between the Single Parent Family Study sample and the U.S. Census sample. The sample from this study tended to contain larger proportions of non-White single parents, never married, single parents out of the labor force, and AFDC recipients than contained in the 1980

Table B. DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF SINGLE PARENTS IN RAMSEY COUNTY, 1980 CENSUS AND 1984 SINGLE PARENT FAMILY STUDY

SEX	1980 ^a (N=570)		1984 ^b (N=431)	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Female	504	88.4	387	91.9
Male	66	11.6	34	8.1
Total	570	100.0	421	100.0
AGE				
15-24	94	16.5	70	16.6
25-34	202	35.4	157	37.3
35+	274	48.1	194	46.1
Total	570	100.0	421	100.0
RACE				
White	475	83.3	313	74.3
Black	59	10.4	60	14.3
Other	36	6.3	48	11.4
Total	570	100.0	421	100.0
MARITAL STATUS				
Divorced	297	52.1	200	47.5
Separated (legally or not)	112	19.6	63	15.0
Widowed	55	9.6	36	8.6
Never Married	106	18.6	122	29.0
Total	570	100.0	421	100.0
AGE OF YOUNGEST				
0-5	206	36.1	170	40.4
6-17	364	63.9	251	59.6
Total	570	100.0	421	100.0
EDUCATION				
Less Than High School	111	19.5	96	22.8
High School Graduate	305	53.5	208	49.4
Some College+	154	27.0	117	27.8
Total	570	100.0	421	100.0
LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION ^c				
In Labor Force	417	73.2	268	63.7
Out of Labor Force	153	26.8	150	35.6
Total	570	100.0	418	100.0
AFDC ^d PAST YEAR				
Yes	185	32.5	216	51.3
No	385	67.5	205	48.7
Total	570	100.0	421	100.0

^a 1980 Census data are based on the Public Use Microsample, a five percent sample derived from the 1980 Census of Ramsey County (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1983A).

^b 1984 data are based on the Single Parent Family Study, a sample derived from a community survey with parents who had been single parents for at least 12 months.

^c The definition for labor force participation is taken from the U.S. Department of Labor. Persons employed full or part-time and unemployed persons are considered to be in the labor force. Unemployed is defined as not working but being available for work and making an effort to find work during the four weeks before being surveyed. Those laid off and waiting to be recalled and those waiting to report to a job within 30 days are also considered unemployed.

^d Aid to Families with Dependent Children

Note: Significance test for sex: corrected chi square = 5.20; df = 1; NS
Significance test for age: chi square = .84; df = 2; NS
Significance test for race: chi square = 28.55; df = 2; p < .01
Significance test for marital status: chi square = 31.90; df = 3; p < .01
Significance test for age of youngest: corrected chi square = 3.34; df = 1; NS
Significance test for education: chi square = 3.75; df = 2; NS
Significance test for labor force participation: corrected chi square = 17.21; df = 1; p < .01
Significance test for AFDC past year: corrected chi square = 67.53; df = 1; p < .01

Census sample. These larger proportions may be due, in part, to the sampling procedure, which drew part of the random sample of households from census tracts in which single parent households were overrepresented. Those census tracts tended to contain low-income housing projects or apartment complexes for families with children. It could also be, however, that the differing proportions are primarily the result of differences in the definition of single parents between the two surveys. If there is a bias in the study sample, then, it tends toward the lower-income single parents and those possibly with the greatest needs.

HOW TO INTERPRET SAMPLE PERCENTAGES

Because this survey is a sample of single parents in Ramsey County, the figures provided are estimates of the true population figures and subject to sampling error. In a sample size of 421, the figures are likely to be accurate within 4 to 6 percentage points on either side of the percentage obtained. That is, within plus or minus 4 percent for percentages in the 0 to 15 and 85 to 100 ranges, within 5 percent for percentages in the 15 to 25 and 75 to 85 ranges, and within 6 percent for percentages in the 25 to 75 range. For example, when we report that 48 percent of single parents are divorced, we can be confident that the true figure is between 42 and 54 percent. Bear in mind, also, that in a sample of 421 single parents one percent represents about 122 single parent families in Ramsey County.

THE SURVEY INTERVIEW

The development of the interview questions began in September, 1983, with a review of the research literature on single parent families and discussions with a variety of social service professionals as well as community leaders, advocates, and single parents groups familiar with the topic. The process focussed on identifying social service issues and unanswered questions about single parents that a community survey could address. The objective was to determine the kind of information that was not available elsewhere and that would be most useful to the social service community. This process culminated in the formation of an advisory committee of Wilder Foundation and other private and public social service funders, planners, administrators, and practitioners (see Appendix B) whose comments and suggestions helped shape the survey questionnaire. The questionnaire was pretested by its chief author and several other trained interviewers before taking its final form.

The questionnaire was designed to be administered in-person by trained interviewers. It contained a standard set of questions and a fixed procedure for administering it. The highly structured instrument helped to ensure uniformity in the way the interview was conducted, thereby improving interpretation of responses. The standard set of questions was a mixture of closed and open-ended questions. For some questions, in other words, respondents were to choose among a set of fixed answer options. Other questions allowed respondents to answer in their own words; their answers were recorded, as given, by the interviewers.

Most of the interviews were conducted in the respondents' homes. Respondents were, however, given the option of coming to the Wilder research office for the interview or of meeting the interviewer at some other location (e.g., a restaurant). Only one interview was self-administered.

Interviews were conducted in private whenever possible. Children were frequently present during the interview, however. While their presence did not seem to inhibit respondents, children did, on occasion, disrupt the interviews and lengthen the interview process. Interviewers were instructed to wait out disruptions and to complete the interview in one sitting rather than arranging for another time to conduct the interview. Overall, the interviews lasted an average of about 90 minutes. Respondents were generally pleased to participate in the survey. Most requested to receive a copy of the study's conclusions.

CHAPTER ONE

SINGLE PARENT FAMILIES: BACKGROUNDS AND CURRENT STATUS

This chapter first identifies the current demographic characteristics of single parents and their children. It next examines the social and economic characteristics of single parents, including their educational attainment, AFDC and labor force participation, and income, establishing economic status categories for comparative purposes. The chapter then turns to the backgrounds of single parents to learn whether the family and demographic background characteristics of single parents relate to their present conditions. The chapter describes the families that raised them. It analyzes the characteristics of single mothers when they first started having children, describing, for example, the consequences of becoming a parent as a teenager. It also profiles the parental and marital histories of single mothers and examines the characteristics of single mothers when they first became single parents.

This chapter, then, provides a current profile of single parent families and a framework for analyzing and understanding the circumstances of single parents in their roles as workers, householders, parents, and single adults that will follow in later chapters. By examining the backgrounds of single parent families, it also establishes a foundation for understanding the strengths and weaknesses of single parents upon entering single parent status, as well as for understanding social trends that might be useful for predicting the prevalence of needs that future cohorts of single parents might have.

SINGLE PARENT FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS -- SEX, AGE, RACE, AND MARITAL STATUS OF SINGLE PARENTS

SEX AND AGE

For purposes of this survey, a single parent family was defined as a family composed of one parent with at least one child age 17 or younger living at home at least half the year. Eligible families had been single parent families for at least 12 months. Persons who were cohabiting and married

persons whose spouses were absent because of military, educational, medical, or business reasons or whose spouses had been absent for other reasons but for less than a year were excluded. Using this definition, the study's sample of single parent families in Ramsey County contained 387, or 92 percent, single mothers and 34, or 8 percent, single fathers.¹ The median age of single parents in this sample was 33.7 years.² More than two-thirds, 69 percent, were between the ages of 25 and 44 (see **Table 1.1**). Those younger than age 25 made up 17 percent of the sample, and those older than 44 represented 15 percent of the sample. Less than one percent of the sample were minor parents; that is, those younger than 18 years old.

From **Table 1.1**, it appears that single mothers were younger than single fathers. Single mothers ranged from 16 years old to 57 years old. Their median age was 33.3 years. Single fathers, on the other hand, ranged from ages 24 to 61. Their median age was 38.0. Single mothers and single fathers, however, did not differ³ significantly in age, in a statistical sense (i.e., at the .01 level of significance).

An analysis of the 5 percent public use microdata sample (PUMS) from the Ramsey County 1980 census as well as a separate PUMS analysis that combined 1980 census data from Hennepin, Anoka, Washington, and Dakota Counties found that, locally, single mothers were significantly younger than single fathers (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1983A). These analyses of PUMS 1980 census data will appear throughout this first chapter in order to examine how the single

¹ Given the small proportion and number of single fathers, statistical relationships between sex of single parents and other characteristics must be interpreted with caution. Because any differences between single mothers and single fathers must be large in order to be significant at the .01 level, seemingly large differences will seldom prove to be statistically significant. Therefore, in addition to examining and reporting the significant differences between the characteristics of mothers and fathers in this sample, apparent differences between single mothers and single fathers will also be reported throughout this chapter. Further testing of the relationships between sex and other characteristics (through the use of supplementary data on single fathers) can be found in chapter 7.

² The median is the middle number in a set of measurements. Thus, 50 percent of the single parents in this sample were age 34 or younger.

³ The phrase "did not differ," used throughout the report, means that the relationship tested did not achieve statistical significance at the .01 level ($P \leq .01$).

Table 1.1. AGE BY SEX

		ALL (N=421) Percent	FEMALE (N=387) Percent	MALE (N=34) Percent
	Number			
16-17	2	0.5	0.5	0.0
18-24	68	16.2	17.1	5.9
25-34	157	37.3	38.2	26.5
35-44	133	31.6	31.0	38.2
45+	<u>61</u>	<u>14.5</u>	<u>13.2</u>	<u>29.4</u>
Total	421	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: Significance test for sex: chi square = 7.46; df = 2; NS

parents in this study compare with those in the 1980 census in Ramsey County and in the other four metropolitan counties.

RACE

The majority of single parents in Ramsey County, according to the 1980 Census, were Caucasian or White. Whites, too, constituted 74 percent of the single parents in this survey. Blacks, the largest racial minority, represented 14 percent of the sample. Other racial minorities, including Hispanics, American Indians and Hmong, made up the remainder of the sample as outlined in **Table 1.2.**

Single mothers and single fathers did not significantly differ by race in this survey. The majority of both females and males were White. **Table 1.2** suggests, however, that single mothers were more likely than single fathers to be racial minorities.

White single mothers and other racial minorities tended to be older than Black single mothers (See **Table 1.3**). The median age for White single mothers was 34.0, compared to a median age of 30.3 for Black single mothers and 35.5 for other racial minorities. This age pattern by race held for Hennepin, Anoka, Washington, and Dakota Counties, but not for Ramsey County, according to the 1980 census (PUMS).

MARITAL STATUS

Divorce, the most common cause of single parent families according to the 1980 census, was also the most common path to single parenthood in this survey. **Table 1.4** shows that 48 percent of the single parents in the sample were divorced. The magnitude of unmarried parenthood was also evident from our data. Never married parents constituted 29 percent of the sample. Parents separated from a spouse, both legally and otherwise, made up the third largest group of single parents (15 percent). Finally, overall, 9 percent of the single parents in this study were widowed.

A comparison of single mothers and single fathers in **Table 1.4** shows that the largest proportions of both women (46 percent) and men (62 percent) were divorced. Single mothers were twice as likely to be never married as they were to be separated -- 31 percent compared to 14 percent. Single fathers, conversely, were more likely to be separated than never married. Finally, both men and women were least likely to become single parents through death of a spouse.

Table 1.2. RACE BY SEX

	ALL	FEMALE	MALE
	(N=421)	(N=387)	(N=34)
	Percent	Percent	Percent
White	74.3	72.9	91.2
Black	14.3	15.2	2.9
Hispanic	4.8	4.7	5.9
American Indian	2.9	3.1	0.0
Hmong	1.7	1.8	0.0
Other Asian	1.0	1.0	0.0
Other	1.2	1.3	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: Significance test for sex: chi square = 5.72;
df = 2; NS

Table 1.3. SINGLE MOTHERS: RACE BY AGE

	16-24	25-34	35+	
	(N=68)	(N=148)	(N=171)	
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Total
White	14.9	37.9	47.2	100.0
Black	28.8	49.2	22.0	100.0
Other racial groups	19.6	26.1	54.3	100.0

Significance test for age differences: chi square = 17.31; df = 4;
p < .01

Table 1.4. MARITAL STATUS BY SEX

	ALL (N=421)		FEMALE (N=387)		MALE (N=34)	
	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number
Divorced	47.5	200	46.3	179	61.8	21
Never married	29.0	122	30.7	119	8.8	3
Separated ^a	15.0	63	14.2	55	23.5	8
Widowed	8.6	36	8.8	34	5.9	2
Total	100.0	421	100.0	387	100.0	34

^a Includes legally separated as well as married persons whose spouses are absent for reasons other than business, schooling, military or hospitalization.

Note: Significance test for sex: chi square = 8.89; df = 3; NS

Divorced and Separated Older Than Never Married Single Parents

The age distributions for divorced, separated, never married, and widowed single parents were different. In general, divorced and widowed single parents tended to be older; separated single parents tended to be somewhat younger; and never married single parents tended to be the youngest. As shown in **Table 1.5**, the majority of divorced single parents, 64 percent, were 35 years old or older. Their median age was 36.4 years old. In contrast, half of the never married single parents were 25 years old to 34 years old; and the next largest proportion, 39 percent, were younger than 25 years old. The median age of never married single parents was 25.6 years old. Separated single parents had a median age of 32.8, while widowed single parents had a median age of 40.5 years old. The age distribution for single mothers (excluding single fathers) reflected this same pattern.

Racial Groups Differ in Marital Status

Table 1.6 shows that Whites and Blacks tended to take different routes to single parenthood. The majority of White single parents, 53 percent, were divorced, nearly double the percentage of White single parents who were never married, 27 percent. In contrast, the largest proportion of Black single parents, 48 percent, were never married, followed by separated, 28 percent, and divorced, 23 percent. Black single parents were more than two times more likely to be separated than White single parents. Single parents from other racial groups resembled White single parents with respect to marital status. Hispanics, for example, the third largest racial group in the study, appeared more likely to be divorced than never married.

SINGLE PARENT FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS -- FAMILY SIZE, CHILDREN'S AGES, AND AGE OF THE YOUNGEST CHILD AT HOME

FAMILY SIZE

The number of children living in the single parent families in this study ranged from one child to seven children. About four-fifths of the single parent families consisted of one or two children. The largest proportion (47 percent) of single parents were responsible for one child. **Table 1.7** shows the distributions for the number of children living at home by sex of the parent. It appears that single fathers tended to have fewer children living at home than did single mothers. Nearly three-fifths of the men had only one child at

Table 1.5. MARITAL STATUS BY AGE

	16-24	25-34	35+	TOTAL	
	(N=70)	(N=157)	(N=194)	(N=421)	
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	(Number)
Divorced	6.5	30.0	63.5	100.0	(200)
Separated ^a	15.9	41.3	42.9	100.0	(63)
Widowed	0.0	27.8	72.2	100.0	(36)
Never Married	38.5	50.0	41.3	100.0	(122)

^a Includes legally separated as well as married persons whose spouses are absent for reasons other than business, schooling, military or hospitalization.

Note: Significance test for age: chi square = 113.16; df = 6; p < .0001

Table 1.6. MARITAL STATUS BY RACE

	WHITE (N=313) Percent	BLACK (N=60) Percent	OTHER (N=48) Percent
Divorced	52.7	23.3	43.8
Never married	26.8	48.3	18.8
Separated ^a	11.8	28.3	18.8
Widowed	8.6	0.0	18.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

^a Includes legally separated as well as married persons whose spouses are absent for reasons other than business, schooling, military or hospitalization.

Note: Significance test for race: chi square = 39.96;
df = 6; p < .001

Table 1.7. NUMBER OF CHILDREN LIVING AT HOME BY SEX

	ALL	FEMALE	MALE
	(N=421)	(N=387)	(N=34)
	Percent	Percent	Percent
1 child	47.0	46.0	58.8
2 children	33.5	33.9	29.4
3+ children	19.5	20.2	11.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: Mean = 1.8; S.D. = 1.1; Median = 1.6; chi square test for sex = 2.41; df = 2; NS

home. The mean number of children living at home with single fathers was 1.6, compared to 1.9 for single mothers. These differences were not significant at the .01 level, however.

Family size varies by race and marital status of single mothers. For the sample of single mothers, racial minority families tended to be larger than White families.⁴ Table 1.8 shows that the majority (54 percent) of White families had one child living at home, while the largest proportion (41 percent) of minority families had three or more children living at home. Separated and widowed single mothers, moreover, were more likely than either divorced or never married single mothers to have larger than average families. These differences are also shown in Table 1.8.

AGES OF CHILDREN AT HOME

The children living in the single parent families in this study ranged in age from less than a year old to age 17 (by definition the oldest age of a dependent child). Table 1.9 shows that 11 percent of the children in this study were age 2 or younger; 17 percent were ages 3 to 5; 23 percent were ages 6 to 9; 32 percent were ages 10 to 14, and 18 percent were ages 15 to 17. The children living with single fathers tended to be older than those living with single mothers. For example, 48 percent of the children living with single fathers compared with 30 percent of those living with single mothers were teenagers (ages 13-17).

AGE OF THE YOUNGEST CHILD LIVING AT HOME

The age of the youngest child to be cared for frequently defines the roles and responsibilities that dominate a single parent's family life. In three-fifths of the study families, the youngest child at home was of school age (6 or older); in the other two-fifths, as shown in Table 1.10, the youngest child at home was a preschooler (age 5 or younger). The median age of the youngest child at home for all families was 7.0 years. The median age of the youngest child of a single father was 11.2 years old and of a single mother was 6.6

⁴ In this analysis and in many of the analyses to follow, when tests for relationships between race and other characteristics find that single mothers from "other racial groups" and Black single mothers do not differ significantly at the .01 level, the data for Black single mothers and the data for single mothers from "other racial groups" are combined to form one racial minority group to compare with White single mothers.

Table 1.8. SINGLE MOTHERS: NUMBER OF CHILDREN LIVING AT HOME BY RACE AND MARITAL STATUS

	RACE		MARITAL STATUS			
	WHITE	OTHER	DIVORCED	NEVER MARRIED	SEPARATED	WIDOWED
	(N=282)	(N=105)	(N=179)	(N=119)	(N=55)	(N=34)
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
One child	<u>53.9</u>	<u>24.8</u>	<u>43.6</u>	<u>59.7</u>	<u>27.3</u>	<u>41.2</u>
Two children	<u>33.7</u>	<u>34.3</u>	<u>38.5</u>	<u>24.4</u>	<u>41.8</u>	<u>29.4</u>
Three or more children	<u>12.4</u>	<u>41.0</u>	<u>17.9</u>	<u>16.0</u>	<u>30.9</u>	<u>29.4</u>
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: When the percentages are underlined, it indicates a significant difference at the .01 level between the groups.

Note: Significance test for race: chi square = 45.06; df = 2; p < .0001

Significance test for marital status: chi square = 20.08; df = 6; p < .01

Table 1.9. AGES OF CHILDREN AT HOME BY SEX OF PARENT

Age	ALL (N=421)		FEMALES (N=387)		MALES (N=34)	
	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number
Less than 1 year	1.8	14	1.8	13	1.9	1
1	4.0	31	4.1	30	1.9	1
2	5.0	39	5.3	38	1.9	1
3	5.5	43	5.7	41	3.7	2
4	6.0	47	6.4	46	1.9	1
5	5.1	40	4.8	35	9.3	5
6	6.2	48	6.5	47	1.9	1
7	5.7	44	5.7	41	5.6	3
8	5.9	46	5.8	42	7.4	4
9	5.1	40	5.5	40	0.0	0
10	6.3	49	6.1	44	9.3	5
11	5.9	46	5.9	43	5.6	3
12	6.3	49	6.6	48	1.9	1
13	7.6	59	7.1	51	14.8	8
14	5.5	43	5.8	42	1.9	1
15	5.3	41	5.0	36	9.3	5
16	8.1	63	7.9	57	11.1	6
17	4.5	35	4.0	29	11.1	6
Total	100.0	777	100.0	723	100.0	54

ALL	Percent	Number
0-2	10.8	84
3-5	16.7	130
6-9	22.9	178
10-14	31.7	246
15-17	17.9	139
Total	100.0	777

Table 1.10. AGE OF YOUNGEST CHILD AT HOME BY SEX OF PARENT

Years	ALL	FEMALE	MALE
	(N=421)	(N=387)	(N=34)
	Percent	Percent	Percent
0- 2	18.1	18.9	8.8
3- 5	22.3	23.0	14.7
6- 9	22.1	23.0	11.8
10-14	26.1	25.1	38.2
15-17	11.4	10.1	26.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Test for difference by sex for youngest: chi square = 13.93;
df = 4; p < .01

years old. The children in single parent families headed by mothers tended to be younger than those in families headed by fathers (see **Table 1.10**).

Age, Race, and Marital Status Linked to Age of the Youngest Child

As might be expected, the age of the youngest child at home is strongly related to the age of the single mother. Mothers younger than 25 years old, as shown in **Table 1.11**, always had at least one preschooler living at home; half of the mothers ages 25 to 34 had a preschooler, and just 12 percent of mothers age 35 or older had a preschooler.

Racial minority single mothers were more likely than White single mothers to have at least one child younger than 6 years old as the youngest at home (53 percent vs. 38 percent).

Finally, the age of the youngest child was also related to the marital status of single mothers, most likely reflecting the age differences between the older divorced, separated, and widowed single mothers and the younger never married single mothers as noted in **Table 1.5**. Nearly 3 out of 4 divorced and widowed single mothers did not have a preschool child. In contrast, nearly two-thirds of never married single mothers (64 percent) had a preschool child (see **Table 1.11**).

These relationships between age of the youngest child and race and marital status were also observed in the 1980 census data for Ramsey County and the other metropolitan counties.

EDUCATIONAL AND ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

EDUCATIONAL LEVELS ATTAINED

This section describes the educational attainment among single parents age 25 and older. (Age 25 was selected as a lower limit for this analysis because persons beyond that age had an opportunity to take part in post-secondary education.) **Table 1.12** shows that about 81 percent of that age group had a high school education or its equivalent; 31 percent had at least some college experience; and a relatively large 19 percent had less than a high school education. Males and females displayed no significant differences in their levels of educational attainment; however, it appears that single mothers were more likely than single fathers to have less than a high school education and that single fathers were more likely than single mothers to have had at least some college experience.

Table 1.11. SINGLE MOTHERS: AGE OF YOUNGEST CHILD BY MOTHER'S AGE, RACE, AND MARITAL STATUS

	MOTHER'S AGE			RACE		MARITAL STATUS			
	16-24	25-34	35+	White	Other	Divorced	Never Married	Separated	Widowed
	(N=68)	(N=148)	(N=171)	(N=282)	(N=105)	(N=179)	(N=119)	(N=55)	(N=34)
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Under age 6	100.0	50.0	11.7	37.6	53.3	27.4	63.9	52.7	23.5
Age 6 or older	0.0	50.0	88.3	62.4	46.7	72.6	36.1	47.3	76.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: Significance test for age: raw chi square = 162.40; df = 2; p < .0001
 Significance test for race: corrected chi square = 7.16; df = 1; p < .01
 Significance test for marital status: chi square = 46.47; df = 3; p < .0001

AGES 25 AND OLDER:
Table 1.12. EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT LEVEL BY SEX

	ALL	FEMALE	MALE
	(N=351)	(N=319)	(N=32)
	Percent	Percent	Percent
Less than H.S.	19.4	20.1	12.5
H.S. Graduate	49.6	50.2	43.8
College + ^a	<u>31.1</u>	<u>29.8</u>	<u>43.8</u>
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

^a College + consists of those with one or more years of college education following high school or its equivalent, no degree necessary

Note: Significance test for sex: chi square = 2.93; df = 2; NS

White Single Mothers Attained Higher Educational Levels than Other Racial Groups

Table 1.13 depicts the highest level of education attained by those ages 25 and older for single mothers by age, race, marital status and age of youngest child. The educational attainment levels of single mothers does not differ by their age or by the age of their youngest child at home.

Consistent with local census data for Ramsey and the other four metropolitan counties, White single mothers were more likely than single mothers from other racial groups to be high school graduates⁵ or to have attended some college. For example, 87 percent of White single mothers graduated from high school, compared with 57 percent for racial minority single mothers. Divorced single mothers in this study, moreover, were more likely than separated, never married, or widowed single mothers to be high school graduates or to have attended some college. These differences were not found in the analysis of Ramsey and other local counties census data, however.

PAST VOCATIONAL/TECHNICAL TRAINING

This section describes the vocational training of single parents ages 25 and older. Twenty-seven percent of the single mothers (N=87) and 47 percent of the single fathers (N=15) reported that they had completed job-related training or had received a vocational/technical certificate or diploma from a technical institute, trade or business school, hospital, or community college. Table 1.14, listing the types of job-related training respondents have completed, shows that single mothers most often completed training for clerical, service (e.g., cosmetology, health aide), and professional-technical work (e.g., registered nursing, health technician, computer programming).

Among single mothers (ages 25 and older), vocational/technical training was not associated with age, race, marital status, or the age of the youngest child at home. High school graduates were more likely than those with less than a high school education to have completed vocational/technical training.

⁵ High school graduates consisted of 84 percent who received high school diplomas and 16 percent who received G.E.D.'s. Those two groups did not differ by age, race, marital status, age of youngest child at home, employment status, AFDC status, or income.

Table 1.13. SINGLE MOTHERS: EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT LEVELS (AGES 25+ ONLY) BY DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

	AGE OF MOTHER		RACE		MARITAL STATUS				AGE OF YOUNGEST	
	25-34	35+	White	Other	Divorced	Never Married	Separated	Widowed	Under 6	6 or older
	(N=148)	(N=171)	(N=240)	(N=79)	(N=166)	(N=73)	(N=46)	(N=34)	(N=94)	(N=225)
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Less than H.S.	20.9	19.3	<u>12.5</u>	<u>43.0</u>	<u>10.2</u>	<u>26.0</u>	<u>37.0</u>	<u>32.4</u>	22.3	19.1
H.S. Graduate	53.4	47.4	<u>53.7</u>	<u>39.2</u>	<u>51.8</u>	<u>57.5</u>	<u>39.1</u>	<u>41.2</u>	54.3	48.4
College+	25.7	33.3	<u>33.7</u>	<u>17.7</u>	<u>38.0</u>	<u>16.4</u>	<u>23.9</u>	<u>26.5</u>	23.4	32.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

^a College+ consists of those with one or more years of college education following high school or its equivalent, no degree necessary.

Note: Underlined percentages signify significant differences at the .01 level

Significance test for age: chi square = 2.24; df = 2; NS

Significance test for race: chi square = 35.25; df = 2; $p < .0001$

Significance test for marital status: chi square = 29.67; df = 6; $p < .0001$

Significance test for youngest: chi square = 2.61; df = 2; NS

TYPES OF JOB-RELATED TRAINING RECEIVED BY SINGLE PARENTS WHO
COMPLETED THE TRAINING OR RECEIVED A VOCATIONAL/TECHNICAL

Table 1.14. CERTIFICATE OR DIPLOMA (AGES 25 AND OLDER ONLY)

	FEMALE		MALE	
	Percent	Number	Percent	Number
Clerical	46.5	40	20.0	3
Service	27.9	24	6.7	1
Professional-Technical	14.0	12	13.3	2
Management-Administrative	3.5	3	6.7	1
Operative	3.5	3	6.7	1
Crafts	2.3	2	40.0	6
Sales	1.2	1	0.0	0
Unspecified	<u>1.2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>6.7</u>	<u>1</u>
Total	100.0	86	100.0	15

One case missing for females

CURRENT STUDENT STATUS

Fourteen percent of the single mothers (N=55) and 6 percent of the single fathers (N=2) were students at the time of this study. Two thirds of the female students were part-time, and one-third were full-time students. For single mothers, being a student at present was not associated with any demographic characteristics. **Table 1.15** shows the types of degrees and schools attended by single mothers. Among female students who were working on degrees and diplomas when surveyed (N=50), about one quarter were receiving a high school education or its equivalent, about one third were receiving vocational or technical training, and about a third were receiving a college education.

About a quarter (N=13) of the female students at the time of this study were attending free public schools. **Table 1.16** shows how the remaining female students were paying for their schooling. About half were receiving at least some public tuition assistance, including 26 percent whose schooling was all or mostly paid for by public tuition assistance. About a quarter were paying for all or most of their education or training with their own income or savings.

LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION AND CURRENT EMPLOYMENT STATUS

The definitions for labor force participation and employment status are taken from the U.S. Department of Labor. Employed full-time is defined as 35 or more hours per week, and part-time is defined as 1 to 34 hours per week. Unemployed is defined as not working but being available for work and making an effort to find work during the four weeks before being surveyed. Those laid off and waiting to be recalled and those waiting to report to a job within 30 days are also considered unemployed. Anyone not fitting those definitions is considered to be out of the labor force.

The majority of both single mothers and single fathers were employed, most often full-time. Any similarity between single mothers and single fathers stopped there, however, for the probability that a single mother was out of the labor force was almost equal to the probability that she was employed full-time. For single mothers, 41 percent were employed full-time, 13 percent were employed part-time, 9 percent were unemployed, and 38 percent were out of the labor force. For single fathers, 71 percent were employed full-time. **Table 1.17** displays the differences between single mothers and single fathers with respect to their current job status.

Table 1.15. SINGLE MOTHERS: TYPE AND PLACE OF CURRENT STUDENT STATUS

<u>TYPE OF DEGREE PURSUING</u>	<u>PERCENT</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>PERCENT OF ALL FEMALES</u>
High School, G.E.D., English as Second Language	23.6	13	3.4
Training/Vocational Certificate	30.9	17	4.4
B.A., B.S.	29.1	16	4.1
MA or Higher	7.3	4	1.0
Other/Not pursuing degree	<u>9.1</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>1.3</u>
Total	100.0	55	14.2
<u>SCHOOL ATTENDING</u>			
TVI	20.0	11	2.8
Other Vocational Schools	9.1	5	1.3
High School, Adult Basic Education	29.1	16	4.1
Community College	14.5	8	2.1
Other Colleges	3.6	2	0.5
University of Minnesota	<u>23.6</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>3.4</u>
Total	100.0	55	14.2

FEMALE STUDENTS:

Table 1.16. HOW PAY FOR SCHOOLING (MULTIPLE RESPONSES INCLUDED, N=42)

	<u>ALL/MOST</u>	<u>SOME/LITTLE</u>	<u>NONE</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
<u>SOURCE</u>				
Own income/savings	23.8	11.9	64.3	100.0
Student loan	11.9	14.3	73.8	100.0
Parent's contribution	7.2	7.1	85.7	100.0
Grant/tuition assistance	26.2	21.4	52.4	100.0
Scholarship/fellowship	0.0	2.4	97.6	100.0
G.I. Bill	0.0	0.0	100.0	100.0
Inheritance	2.4	0.0	97.6	100.0
Alimony	0.0	0.0	100.0	100.0
Fringe Benefit from Work	2.4	4.8	92.9	100.0

Table 1.17. CURRENT EMPLOYMENT STATUS^a BY SEX

	ALL	FEMALE	MALE
	(N=418)	(N=384)	(N=34)
	Percent	Percent	Percent
Full-time	43.1	40.6	70.6
Part-time	12.0	12.5	5.9
Unemployed	9.1	8.9	11.8
Not in Labor Force	35.9	38.0	11.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

^a Employed full-time is defined as 35 or more hours per week. Employed part-time is defined as less than 35 hours a week. Unemployed is defined as not working but looking for work during the four weeks previous to being interviewed for the study. Not in the labor force is defined as not employed full-time nor part-time nor unemployed.

Note: 3 missing not included in percentages

Note: Significance test for sex: chi square = 13.95;
df = 3; p < .01

Labor Force Participation and Employment Status Related to Single Mother Family Characteristics

Labor force participation and employment status were strongly related to age, race, marital status, and the age of the youngest child living at home. **Table 1.18** outlines the differences found in this study.

Older single mothers participated in the labor force to a greater extent than did younger single mothers. The majority of single mothers age 35 or older were employed full-time, although a quarter of this group was out of the labor force. Single mothers younger than 25 years old, in contrast, were largely out of the labor force. Those in the labor force were as likely to be unemployed as employed full-time. Those employed, moreover, were slightly more likely to work part-time than full-time.

White single mothers were more likely than racial minority single mothers to be in the labor force. Forty-seven percent of White single mothers were employed full-time, about double the proportion for minority single mothers (24 percent). In contrast, more than half of the minority single mothers were out of the labor force, compared to about one-third of the White single mothers.

Similarly, divorced single mothers tended to participate more in the labor force than never married single mothers. The majority of divorced single mothers were employed full-time; though, about a quarter of divorced mothers were out of the labor force. In contrast, the majority of never married single mothers were out of the labor force, and 23 percent worked full-time.

Finally, **Table 1.18** shows that the majority of mothers with preschool children (under age 6) were out of the labor force. In contrast, the majority of mothers whose youngest child was 6 or older were employed full-time. Some mothers with preschool children did work, 19 percent full-time and 13 percent part-time. Nearly a quarter of the mothers whose youngest child was school-age, moreover, were not participating in the labor force.

These relationships between labor force participation and age, race, marital status and the age of the youngest child found in this study were also observed in the 1980 local census data.

Labor Force Participation and Employment Status Related to Educational Attainment but not Vocational Training

For single mothers age 25 or older, the majority (61 percent) of those with less than a high school education were out of the labor force (see **Table 1.19**). In contrast, more than two-thirds (69 percent) of the single mothers

Table 1.18. SINGLE MOTHERS: EMPLOYMENT STATUS^a BY DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

	AGE OF MOTHER (IN YEARS)			RACE		MARITAL STATUS				AGE OF YOUNGEST ^b	
	16-24	25-34	35+	White	Other	Divorced	Never Married	Separated	Widowed	Under 6	6 or older
	(N=68)	(N=147)	(N=169)	(N=280)	(N=104)	(N=178)	(N=119)	(N=54)	(N=33)	(N=161)	(N=223)
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Full-time	10.3	40.8	52.7	46.8	24.0	51.7	22.7	42.6	42.4	19.3	56.1
Part-time	13.2	9.5	14.8	13.6	9.6	15.2	10.1	3.7	21.2	13.0	12.1
Unemployed	10.3	8.8	8.3	7.9	11.5	9.6	10.1	7.4	3.0	8.1	9.4
Out of Labor Force	66.2	40.8	24.3	31.8	54.8	23.6	57.1	46.3	33.3	59.6	22.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

^a Employed full-time is defined as 35 or more hours per week. Employed part-time is defined as less than 35 hours a week. Unemployed is defined as not working but looking for work during the four weeks previous to being interviewed for the study. Not in the labor force is defined as not employed full-time nor part-time nor unemployed.

^b age of youngest child living at home

Note: 3 missing cases

Note: Significance test for age: chi square = 46.33; df = 6; $p < .0001$
 Significance test for race: chi square = 22.34; df = 3; $p < .001$
 Significance test for marital status: chi square = 45.82; df = 9; $p < .001$
 Significance test for age of youngest: chi square = 65.46; df = 3; $p < .0001$

Table 1.19. SINGLE MOTHERS: EMPLOYMENT STATUS BY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT (AGES 25+ ONLY)

	LESS THAN HIGH SCHOOL	HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE	COLLEGE+
	(N=64)	(N=157)	(N=95)
	Percent	Percent	Percent
<u>EMPLOYMENT STATUS</u>			
Full-time	<u>21.9</u>	<u>47.1</u>	<u>64.2</u>
Part-time	<u>6.3</u>	<u>13.4</u>	<u>14.7</u>
Unemployed	<u>10.9</u>	<u>8.9</u>	<u>6.3</u>
Not in Labor Force	<u>60.9</u>	<u>30.6</u>	<u>14.7</u>
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: Underlined percentages signify significant differences at the .01 level

Significance test for employment status: chi square = 43.77; df = 6; p < .0001

with a high school education or its equivalent as their highest level of educational attainment participated in the labor force, mostly working full-time. Single mothers with at least some college education, finally, were the least likely to be out of the labor force (15 percent) and the most likely to be employed full-time (64 percent). Educational attainment was similarly associated with employment status locally as indicated in census data from Ramsey and the other metropolitan counties.

Among single mothers, those who completed vocational/technical training were as likely to be in the labor force as those without any training.

Unemployed respondents appeared the most likely to be students when surveyed, followed by those not in the labor force, those employed part-time, and those employed full-time.

AID TO FAMILIES WITH DEPENDENT CHILDREN

Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) provides cash assistance to eligible low-income families with dependent children. When this survey was conducted, monthly grants were \$412 for one parent with one dependent child, \$500 for a parent and two dependents, and \$583 for a parent and three dependents. Forty percent of the AFDC families had one child; 32 percent had 2 children; 18 percent had 3 children, and 10 percent had 4 or more children. The median age of the parent was 29.5, and the median age of the children was 7.3

Single mothers received AFDC to a much greater extent than single fathers. Overall, 51 percent of the sample had received any AFDC in the 12 months before being interviewed, including the majority of females (55 percent) and only 3 of the 34 (9 percent) males.

At the time of this survey, 48 percent of the sample were AFDC recipients, including 53 percent of the single mothers and 3 percent of the single fathers. Among single parents who were receiving AFDC when surveyed, the median length of time was 4.4 years, ranging from less than a year to 21 years (see **Table 1.20**).⁶ The majority (72 percent) of single parents who were AFDC recipients when surveyed had been receiving AFDC for as long as they have been single parents.

⁶ The mean length of time for the 204 single parents receiving AFDC was 5.8 years with a S.D. of 4.6.

Table 1.20. NUMBER OF YEARS HAVE RECEIVED AFDC^a

<u>YEARS</u>	<u>PERCENT</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>
Less than 1	2.0	4
1	12.7	26
2	11.3	23
3	14.2	29
4	10.8	22
5	10.8	22
6	6.4	13
7	4.9	10
8	2.9	6
9	5.4	11
10	3.4	7
11	1.5	3
12	2.5	5
13	2.0	4
14	1.5	3
15	1.0	2
16	3.4	7
17	0.5	1
18	2.0	4
19	0.5	1
20	0.0	0
21	<u>0.5</u>	<u>1</u>
Total	100.0	204

^a Includes years receiving AFDC for those who were receiving AFDC when surveyed

Note: Mean = 5.8; S.D. = 4.6

AFDC Status Related to Single Mother Family Characteristics

Single mothers who were receiving AFDC when interviewed for this study differed significantly from those not receiving AFDC by age, race, marital status, and age of their youngest child at home. **Table 1.21** shows that younger single mothers were more likely than older single mothers to have been receiving AFDC at the time of this study. For example, 87 percent of single mothers younger than 25 years old compared to 36 percent of mothers 35 and older were receiving AFDC. Similarly high proportions of racial minority single mothers (77 percent), never married single mothers (78 percent), and mothers with preschool children (75 percent) were receiving AFDC when interviewed. In contrast, smaller proportions of White single mothers (43 percent), divorced single mothers (39 percent), and mothers of school-aged children (36 percent) were receiving AFDC. These relationships with age, race, marital status, and age of their youngest child at home also held for Ramsey and the other four counties, according to 1980 census data.

Despite these relationships, it should be pointed out that the majority of single mothers receiving AFDC in this study and in Ramsey County are White and age 25 or older.

AFDC Status Related to Educational Attainment Levels in This Study as Well as Locally

Among single mothers in this sample (age 25 or older), those who were not high school graduates were more likely than their counterparts with more education to have been receiving AFDC at the time of this study. Three quarters of those with less than a high school education were receiving AFDC when surveyed (see **Table 1.22**). In contrast, single mothers with some college education were the least likely to be receiving AFDC, 19 percent receiving AFDC at the time of this study. Single mothers whose highest level of educational attainment was a high school education or its equivalent were rather evenly split between receiving or not receiving AFDC when surveyed. This association between educational attainment and AFDC was evident in the Ramsey County census sample and the four-county sample as well.

INCOME

Annual family cash income before taxes last year (1983) for single parents ranged from less than \$4,000 to \$50,000 or more. (Annual income for this study does not include non-cash transfer payments such as food stamps or medical

Table 1.21. SINGLE MOTHERS: RECEIVING AFDC WHEN SURVEYED BY DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

	ALL (N=387) Percent	AGE OF MOTHER			RACE		MARITAL STATUS				AGE OF YOUNGEST	
		16-24	25-34	35+	White	Other	Divorced	Never Married	Separated	Widowed	Under 6	6 or Older
		(N=68) Percent	(N=148) Percent	(N=171) Percent	(N=282) Percent	(N=105) Percent	(N=179) Percent	(N=119) Percent	(N=55) Percent	(N=34) Percent	(N=162) Percent	(N=225) Percent
Percent Who Received AFDC	52.5	86.8	56.1	35.7	43.3	77.1	39.1	78.2	56.4	26.5	75.3	36.0
Percent Not Receiving AFDC	47.5	13.2	43.9	64.3	56.7	22.9	60.9	21.8	43.6	73.5	24.7	64.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Significance test for age: chi square = 52.19; df = 2; p < .0001

Significance test for race: corrected chi square = 33.87; df = 1; p < .0001

Significance test for marital status: chi square = 53.84; df = 3; p < .0001

Significance test for age of youngest: corrected chi square = 58.35; df = 1; p < .0001

SINGLE MOTHERS:
Table 1.22. AFDC STATUS BY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT (AGES 25+ ONLY)

	LESS THAN H.S. (N=64) Percent	H.S. GRAD. (N=160) Percent	COLLEGE+ (N=95) Percent
<u>AFDC STATUS</u>			
Yes	<u>75.0</u>	<u>48.7</u>	<u>18.9</u>
No	<u>25.0</u>	<u>51.3</u>	<u>81.1</u>
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Significance test for AFDC status: chi square = 50.20; df = 2;
p < .0001

assistance.) Single fathers appeared to have higher incomes than single mothers. Half of the study families headed by mothers had annual cash incomes of less than \$8,000, while 15 percent of study families headed by fathers had incomes below that level (see **Table 1.23**).

Income Related to Single Mother Family Characteristics

Income, as employment status and AFDC status, was strongly related to age, race, marital status, and the age of the youngest child living at home. Single mothers younger than 25 years old, racial minorities, never married single mothers, and mothers of preschoolers were more likely than other single mothers to have very low incomes. A large majority of all those groups had incomes of less than \$8,000 annually. Conversely, single mothers 35 years old and older, White single mothers, widowed and divorced, and mothers whose youngest child was school-aged were more likely than other single mothers to have annual incomes of \$14,000 or more (see **Table 1.23**). Similar relationships between income and these demographic characteristics existed in 1980 census data for Ramsey County and the other local counties.

Income Related to Education and Employment Status

Table 1.24, shows the strong relationship between educational attainment levels and income, a relationship consistent with local census data. Among single mothers age 25 and older, 68 percent of single mothers who were not high school graduates had annual incomes of less than \$8,000 compared with 46 percent of those who graduated from high school but did not attend college, and 18 percent of those with at least some college education.

As expected, employment status and income were strongly linked (see **Table 1.24**). Single mothers out of the labor force and unemployed were more likely than those working to have annual incomes of less than \$8,000, and conversely, single mothers working full-time were more likely than other single mothers to have annual incomes of \$14,000 or more. A salient finding here, however, is that, although the majority of those employed full-time had incomes of \$14,000 or more, 42 percent of full-time working mothers had incomes of less than \$14,000 a year, including 14 percent who had incomes of less than \$8,000. More than half of this latter group of full-time workers with annual incomes of less than \$8,000 also received AFDC.

Table 1.23. INCOME^a BY DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

	SEX		AGE ^b			RACE ^b		MARITAL STATUS ^b				AGE OF YOUNGEST ^b	
	Female	Male	16-24	25-34	35+	White	Other	Divorced	Never Married	Separated	Widowed	Under 6	Age 6 or older
	(N=383)	(N=34)	(N=67)	(N=146)	(N=170)	(N=279)	(N=104)	(N=179)	(N=117)	(N=55)	(N=32)	(N=160)	(N=223)
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Less than \$8,000	49.6	14.7	86.6	48.6	35.9	44.4	63.5	36.3	76.1	47.3	31.3	66.2	37.7
\$8,000-\$14,000	21.7	11.8	9.0	26.0	22.9	21.1	23.1	27.4	10.3	27.3	21.9	20.0	22.9
\$14,000+	28.7	73.5	4.5	25.3	41.2	34.4	13.5	36.3	13.7	25.5	46.9	13.7	39.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

^a Annual family cash income before taxes last year (1983)^b Single mothers only

Note: 4 cases missing

Note: All differences significant at the .01 level

Significance test for sex: chi square = 28.97; df = 2; p < .0001

Significance test for age: chi square = 54.81; df = 4; p < .0001

Significance test for race: chi square = 17.23; df = 2; p < .001

Significance test for marital status: chi square = 52.33; df = 6; p < .0001

Significance test for age of youngest: chi square = 37.14; df = 2; p < .0001

Table 1.24. SINGLE MOTHERS: ANNUAL INCOME BY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT (AGES 25+ ONLY) AND EMPLOYMENT STATUS

	EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT			EMPLOYMENT STATUS			
	Less than high school	High school graduate	College+	Full-time	Part-time	Unemployed	Not in Labor Force
	(N=63) Percent	(N=158) Percent	(N=95) Percent	(N=156) Percent	(N=48) Percent	(N=33) Percent	(N=144) Percent
ANNUAL INCOME							
Less than \$8,000	68.3	45.6	17.9	13.5	45.8	81.8	81.9
\$8,000-\$14,000	23.8	20.9	30.5	28.2	27.1	12.1	15.3
\$14,000 +	7.9	33.5	51.6	58.3	27.1	6.1	2.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: All differences significant at .01 level.

Significance test for education: chi square = 47.68; df = 4; p < .0001

Significance test for employment status: chi square = 173.54; df = 6; p < .0001

AFDC, LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION, AND EMPLOYMENT STATUS

The sample of single mothers, as shown in **Table 1.25**, can be broken down into three different groups -- Group 1) single mothers, working and non-working, who did not receive AFDC assistance (48 percent); Group 2) non-working single mothers who received AFDC assistance (43 percent); and Group 3) working single mothers who received AFDC assistance (9 percent). Working single mothers, mostly full-time, who received no AFDC assistance constituted most of the first group and the largest proportion of single mothers, 44 percent. Single mothers out of the labor force and receiving AFDC assistance constituted the majority of the second group and the next largest proportion of the sample, 36 percent. Employed single mothers, 64 percent part-time, who also received AFDC assistance made up 9 percent of the sample. Four-fifths of the single mothers in this third group had annual incomes of less than \$8,000. Working and receiving AFDC was not associated with any demographic characteristics among single mothers. Those with a high school education appeared more likely than those without a high school education to be in this group rather than in the AFDC only group.

LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

The majority, 69 percent, of the single parents surveyed lived on their own with their minor children. That is, no other adults were present in the household. Sixteen percent of the respondents lived with their parents, sisters, or other relatives.⁷ Eleven percent had at least one older child (age 18 or older) at home. A small percentage of single parents in the sample, 2 percent, shared housing with other single parents. **Table 1.26** shows the living arrangements for single mothers and single fathers. It appears that single fathers were more likely than single mothers to have at least one older child at home -- 21 percent compared with 10 percent.

Shared Living Arrangements More an Issue of Age Than of Economic Circumstances

To examine shared housing patterns, the single mother sample was split into two comparison groups. Single mothers living with their children, regardless of age, made up one group, representing 79 percent of the sample.

⁷ About one-quarter of the single parents living with their own parents, or about 2 percent of the single parents overall, had never moved out on their own.

Table 1.25. SINGLE MOTHERS: AFDC AND LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION

	<u>Percent of Total</u>	<u>Number</u>
Group 1: Working and non-working/ No AFDC Assistance		
Full-time	37.2	143
Part-time	6.5	25
Unemployed	1.8	7
Not in Labor Force	<u>2.1</u>	<u>8</u>
SUBTOTAL	47.6	183
Group 2: Non-working/ AFDC Assistance		
Unemployed	7.0	27
Not in Labor Force	<u>35.9</u>	<u>138</u>
SUBTOTAL	42.9	165
Group 3: Working/AFDC Assistance		
Full-time	3.4	13
Part-time	<u>6.0</u>	<u>23</u>
SUBTOTAL	9.4	36
TOTAL	<u>100.0%</u>	<u>384</u>

Table 1.26. LIVING ARRANGEMENTS BY SEX

	ALL	FEMALE	MALE
	(N=420)	(N=386)	(N=34)
	Percent	Percent	Percent
Minor Children	68.6	69.2	61.8
Minor and Older Children	11.0	10.1	20.6
Parents/Grandparents	7.1	7.0	8.8
Other Relatives	9.0	9.6	2.9
Friends, Non-relatives	4.3	4.1	5.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: one case missing

Note: Significance test for sex: corrected chi square = .04; df = 1; NS

The other 21 percent of the single mother families shared housing with at least one other adult. The two groups did not significantly differ by race or marital status. The two groups, moreover, did not significantly differ by labor force participation, AFDC status or by income status. They did differ by age and age of their youngest child, however (see **Table 1.27**). The mothers living in shared arrangements were more likely than their counterparts living on their own to be younger than 25 years old and to have at least one preschooler as the youngest child at home. More than one third of the single mothers age 25 and younger and 29 percent of the mothers with preschoolers lived with at least one other adult. Shared housing, then, might serve as a kind of social support for those who need the most help.

FAMILY OF ORIGIN

FAMILY OF ORIGIN TYPES

The examination of single parent families now turns to an analysis of the family and demographic background characteristics of single parents. Two-thirds of the single parents in this study grew up with both natural parents. That is, they lived with two natural parents most of the time between the ages of 6 and 16. **Table 1.28** shows that single mother only families were the next most common type of family of origin, experienced by 22 percent of the respondents in the study. Among respondents who grew up in such families, the majority (52 percent) were raised by a divorced parent; 28 percent lived with a widowed parent; 12 percent lived with a separated parent, and 8 percent lived with a never married parent. Being raised by a mother who had remarried was the third most common, yet relatively infrequent type of experience for single parents when they were growing up, representing 5 percent of the total sample.

In order to provide a comparative perspective for these findings and other subsequent findings in this report, a series of comparisons were conducted with data drawn from a recent needs assessment survey of a representative sample of young adults (19 to 34 years old) in Ramsey County (Mueller and Cooper, 1984). These comparisons include only those single parent respondents from the present study in the 19 to 34 age range. According to the first of these comparisons, single parents (19 to 34) were significantly less likely than other young adults to be raised by both natural parents. Eighty-five percent of young adults in the general sample (Young Adult Study) grew up with both natural

Table 1.27. SINGLE MOTHERS: LIVING ARRANGEMENT BY DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

	AGE			MARITAL STATUS				RACE		AGE OF YOUNGEST	
	16-24	25-34	35+	Divorced	Separated	Widowed	Never Married	White	Other	Under 6	6 or Older
	(N=68) Percent	(N=138) Percent	(N=146) Percent	(N=179) Percent	(N=55) Percent	(N=34) Percent	(N=118) Percent	(N=256) Percent	(N=69) Percent	(N=153) Percent	(N=199) Percent
Children Only (All ages)	<u>64.7</u>	<u>81.9</u>	<u>86.3</u>	82.7	87.3	67.6	73.7	82.0	76.0	<u>71.2</u>	<u>87.4</u>
Other Adults in Household	<u>35.3</u>	<u>18.1</u>	<u>13.7</u>	<u>17.3</u>	<u>12.7</u>	<u>32.4</u>	<u>26.3</u>	<u>18.0</u>	<u>24.0</u>	<u>28.8</u>	<u>12.6</u>
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: One case missing

Note: Underlined percentages signify significant differences at the .01 level

Significance test for age: chi square = 14.05; df = 2; p < .001

Significance test for marital status: chi square = 8.41; df = 3; NS

Significance test for divorced, separated: corrected chi square = .36; df = 1; NS

Significance test for race: corrected chi square = 1.23; df = 1; NS

Significance test for age of youngest = corrected chi square = 13.39; df = 1; p < .001

Table 1.28. TYPE OF FAMILY OF ORIGIN*

	Percent	Number (N=421)
Natural parents	66.0	278
Mother only	22.1	93
Mother, step-father	5.0	21
Grandparents	1.7	7
Foster parents	1.4	6
Father only	1.2	5
Adoptive parents	1.2	5
Father, step-mother	0.5	2
Other relatives	0.5	2
Other	<u>0.5</u>	<u>2</u>
Total	100.0	421

* Refers to the type of family in which the respondent lived most of the time between the ages of 6 and 16.

parents compared with 66 percent of the "young adult" single parents in this study.⁸

Table 1.29 shows the demographic characteristics (sex, age, race, and marital status) of respondents in this study raised in natural two-parent and "other" families. ("Other" families of origin refers to being raised by two parents, one or both of whom were step, foster, or adoptive parents; one parent; grandparents or other relatives; or spending most of the time between the ages of 6 and 16 in an institution for juveniles). Single mothers and single fathers were not found to differ significantly with respect to their families of origin; in the relatively small sample of single fathers, however, only about one in ten had grown up in a single parent family.

Among single mothers, White single mothers were more likely than racial minority single mothers to grow up with both natural parents (74 percent compared with 40 percent). Divorced, separated, and widowed single mothers, moreover, were more likely than never married single mothers to be raised by two natural parents. Families of origin for single mothers did not vary significantly by age. Younger (ages 16-24) single mothers, however, appeared to be less likely to have grown up with both natural parents.

SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS BACKGROUND

The socioeconomic status of the respondent's family of origin was measured by ranking the occupational prestige of his or her father's (or father substitute's) occupation while the respondent was growing up (between the ages of 6 and 16). If no father was present, the mother's occupation was used instead. The occupational prestige rankings, based on occupational prestige scores developed by Paul Siegel, were drawn from Hauser and Featherman (1977). Higher scores indicate higher occupational prestige rankings. This analysis excludes 11 percent of the respondents whose family of origin was without a working parent.

Table 1.30 shows that single mothers and single fathers came from similar socioeconomic status backgrounds. Among single mothers, White single mothers came from comparatively higher socioeconomic status backgrounds than single mothers from other racial groups. Also, divorced single mothers appeared to

⁸ Significance test for family of origin (two-parent vs. other): corrected chi square = 45.73; df = 1; $p < .0001$.

Table 1.29. TYPE OF FAMILY OF ORIGIN BY DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

	ALL	SEX		AGE ^a			RACE ^a		MARITAL STATUS ^a			
		Female	Male	16-24	25-34	35+	White	Other	Divorced	Never Married	Separated	Widowed
	(N=421)	(N=387)	(N=34)	(N=68)	(N=148)	(N=171)	(N=282)	(N=105)	(N=179)	(N=119)	(N=55)	(N=34)
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Natural parents	66.0	64.9	79.4	50.0	69.6	66.7	<u>74.1</u>	<u>40.0</u>	<u>69.3</u>	<u>52.1</u>	<u>67.3</u>	<u>82.4</u>
Other ^b	34.0	35.1	20.6	50.0	30.4	33.3	<u>25.9</u>	<u>60.0</u>	<u>30.7</u>	<u>47.9</u>	<u>32.7</u>	<u>17.6</u>
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

^a Single mothers only

^b Other family of origin types includes those being raised most of the time between the ages of 6 and 16 in a two parent family in which one or both parents were step, foster, or adoptive parents; a one parent family; a grandparent or other relative-headed family; or an institution for juveniles.

Note: Significance test for sex: corrected chi square = 2.34; df = 1; NS

Significance test for age: chi square = 8.29; df = 2; NS

Significance test for race: corrected chi square = 37.58; df = 1; p < .0001

Significance test for marital status: chi square = 14.73; df = 3; p < .01

Note: Underlined percentages signify significant differences at the .01 level

Table 1.30. FAMILY OF ORIGIN'S SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS BY RESPONDENT'S CURRENT DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

	SEX		AGE ^a			RACE ^a		MARITAL STATUS ^a			
	Female (N=331)	Male (N=32)	16-24 (N=56)	25-34 (N=131)	35+ (N=144)	White (N=255)	Other (N=76)	Divorced (N=153)	Never Married (N=99)	Separated (N=47)	Widowed (N=32)
Socioeconomic Status of Family of Origin ^b											
Mean	37.4	38.4	38.9	37.0	37.1	<u>38.6</u>	<u>33.2</u>	39.3	35.0	35.1	38.7
(S.D.)	(13.0)	(13.2)	(13.5)	(13.5)	(12.3)	(13.0)	(12.1)	(12.7)	(13.3)	(12.7)	(12.6)

^a Single mothers only

^b Measured by occupational prestige ranking of respondent's father's (or father substitute's) occupation or, if no father present, mother's occupation while respondent was growing up (ages 6-16). Rankings, based on occupation prestige scores developed by Paul Siegel, were drawn from Hauser and Featherman (1977). Respondents without a working parent are excluded.

Note: Mean socioeconomic status for total sample was 37.5, S.D. = 13.0
Mean socioeconomic status for single mothers was 37.4, S.D. = 13.0

Note: Underlined mean scores signify significant differences between means at the .01 level using the F-Test.

Significance test for sex: $F = .17$; $df = 1, 361$; NS

Significance test for age: $F = .48$; $df = 2, 328$; NS

Significance test for race: $F = 10.67$; $df = 1, 329$; $p < .01$

Significance test for marital status: $F = 2.84$; $df = 3, 327$; NS

come from comparatively higher socioeconomic status backgrounds than separated and never married single mothers. The socioeconomic status of family of origin was not related to the respondent's age at the time of the survey. Finally, the comparison of data from this study and the Young Adult Study (see above) found that the socioeconomic status backgrounds of single parents (ages 19 to 34) were significantly lower than the socioeconomic status backgrounds of young adults in general.

NUMBER OF SIBLINGS

Single parents in this study tended to come from large families. The vast majority of male and female respondents had three or more siblings. The number of siblings for mothers ranged from 0 to 20. Four percent had no siblings; 8 percent had one sibling; 17 percent had two siblings, and 71 percent had three or more siblings. The number of siblings for male respondents ranged from 0 to 9. Six percent had no siblings; 9 percent had one; 21 percent had 2; and 65 percent had 3 or more siblings.⁹

Among 19 to 34 year olds, single parents in this study grew up in significantly larger families than young adults in general according to a comparison with data from the Young Adult Study. The mean number of siblings for those ages 19 to 34 in this study was 4.7 compared with a mean of 3.5 for young adults in the general Young Adult Study sample.¹⁰

Single mothers 25 to 34 years old, as shown in Table 1.31, appeared somewhat more likely to have grown up in a larger family than single mothers younger or older. The mean number of siblings did not vary by marital status for single mothers or by type of family of origin (i.e., both natural parents vs. other family types). It did differ significantly by race, however, racial minority single mothers tending to have more siblings, on average, than White single mothers. Finally, single mothers who grew up in larger families tended to come from comparatively lower socioeconomic status backgrounds than single mothers with fewer siblings.¹¹

⁹ The sample mean was 4.3, S.D. = 2.9. The mean for fathers was 4.2, S.D. = 2.6, and the mean for mothers was 4.3, S.D. = 2.9.

¹⁰ F-Test for difference between means: $F = 45.76$; $df = 1, 1666$; $p \leq .0001$.

¹¹ Pearson's correlation coefficient for relationship between number of siblings and socioeconomic status background: $r = -.22$; $df = 329$; $p < .01$ (excludes respondents with no working parent).

Table 1.31. SINGLE MOTHERS: AVERAGE NUMBER OF SIBLINGS BY BACKGROUND AND CURRENT DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

	AGE			RACE		MARITAL STATUS				FAMILY OF ORIGIN	
	<u>16-24</u> (N=68)	<u>25-34</u> (N=148)	<u>35+</u> (N=171)	<u>White</u> (N=282)	<u>Other</u> (N=105)	<u>Divorced</u> (N=179)	<u>Never Married</u> (N=119)	<u>Separated</u> (N=55)	<u>Widowed</u> (N=34)	<u>Natural Parents</u> (N=251)	<u>Other</u> (N=136)
Average (Mean)	4.1	4.8	4.0	<u>3.8</u>	<u>5.8</u>	3.8	4.7	4.8	4.7	4.4	4.2
S.D.	(2.4)	(3.1)	(3.0)	(2.4)	(3.7)	(2.4)	(3.1)	(3.4)	(3.9)	(2.8)	(3.2)

Note: Mean number of siblings for total sample (N=387) was 4.3, S.D. = 2.9

Note: Underlined mean scores indicate a significant difference at the .01 level using the F statistic.

Significance test for age: $F = 3.84$; $df = 2, 384$; NS

Significance test for race: $F = 41.17$; $df = 1, 385$; $p < .0001$

Significance test for marital status: $F = 3.12$; $df = 3, 383$; NS

Significance test for family of origin: $F = .39$; $df = 1, 385$; NS

AGE MOVED OUT ON OWN

"Moving out on own" is defined as moving out from the family of origin home, parental or otherwise, to live on one's own, excluding going to a college dormitory or into the military or another form of institutional housing.

Nearly three-fourths of single parents in this survey moved out on their own before reaching the age of 20.¹² About 44 percent moved out on their own at the ages of 18 or 19, and 31 percent moved out when they were 17 years old or younger. By age 24, all but 2 percent of those who would move out had moved out of their family of origin homes (see **Table 1.32**). Single parents ages 19 to 34 moved out on their own at significantly younger ages than other young adults. Among those ages 19 to 34, respondents in this study moved out on their own at a mean age of 18.0 compared with a mean age of 18.8 for respondents from the Young Adult Study.¹³

Single mothers not raised by both natural parents left home at younger ages, on average, than those raised by both natural parents.¹⁴ Single mothers from lower socioeconomic status backgrounds tended to move out on their own at younger ages than those from higher socioeconomic status backgrounds.¹⁵ Also, single mothers raised in larger families tended to leave home at younger ages, on average, than those raised in families with fewer siblings.¹⁶

Divorced and separated single mothers were no different than never married single mothers with respect to the age they left home. Racial minorities, however, moved out at younger ages, on average, than White single mothers.¹⁷

¹² The mean age for single mothers was 18.4; S.D. = 2.3.

¹³ F-Test for difference between means = 24.83; df = 1, 1411; $p < .0001$.

¹⁴ F-Test for the difference between means: $F = 8.56$; df = 1, 375;

$p < .01$.

¹⁵ Pearson's correlation coefficient for the relationship between age moved out on own and socioeconomic status background: $r = .15$; df = 321;

$p < .01$.

¹⁶ Pearson correlation coefficient for relationship between age moved out on own and number of siblings: $r = -.24$; df = 375; $p < .01$.

¹⁷ F-Test for the difference between means: $F = 10.18$; df = 1, 375; $p < .01$.

Table 1.32. AGE MOVED OUT ON OWN

Age	Percent	Number
12	0.5	2
13	1.5	6
14	1.2	5
15	2.2	9
16	10.7	44
17	14.6	60
18	30.4	125
19	13.1	54
20	10.9	45
21	5.1	21
22	4.4	18
23	1.2	5
24	1.7	7
25	0.5	2
26	0.2	1
27	0.5	2
28	0.5	2
29	0.2	1
30	0.0	0
31	0.0	0
32	0.2	1
33	0.2	1
Total	100.0	411

10 cases missing

FAMILY FORMATION -- PARENTAL AND MARITAL PATTERNS

AGE BECAME A PARENT

The following analysis of the age single mothers became parents includes only those currently ages 16 to 34. The age of first birth for this subgroup of single mothers ranged from 14 to 29 years old. The median age of first birth for this subgroup of single mothers was 19.4 years, 51 percent becoming parents before the age of 20. Nearly a quarter were age 17 or younger when they became a parent (see Table 1.33). The mean age of first birth for single mothers 19 to 34 in this study (20.0) was significantly younger than the mean age of first birth (22.6) for mothers in the Young Adult Study.¹⁸ Fewer than 10 percent of the mothers in the Young Adult Study, moreover, were age 17 or younger when they became parents.

Teenage Parenthood Related to Family of Origin Type and the Age Respondents Moved Out on Their Own

Single mothers (ages 16 to 34 when surveyed) not raised by both natural parents were more likely than those raised by both natural parents to become parents as minors (ages 14-17) -- 32 percent compared with 19 percent -- and more likely to become parents as teenagers (ages 14-19). The majority, 72 percent, of respondents not raised by both natural parents compared with 39 percent of those raised by both natural parents had their first child before the age of 20 (see Table 1.34).

The age single mothers (ages 16 to 34) became parents was not related to the socioeconomic status of their family of origin nor to their number of siblings. It was, however, related to the age respondents left home. Not surprisingly, those who had their first child at younger ages tended to leave home at younger ages (see Table 1.35).

Teenage Parenthood Related to Race and Apparently to Marital Status

White single mothers were less likely than single mothers from other racial groups to be teenage mothers (see Table 1.34). The majority, 60 percent, of White single mothers (ages 16 to 34) became parents at age 20 or

¹⁸ The median age of first birth for young adult mothers in general was 22.4. F-Test for difference between means: $F = 68.75$; $df = 1,549$; $p < .0001$.

Table 1.33. SINGLE MOTHERS (AGES 16-34): AGE BECAME A PARENT

<u>Age</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Number</u>
14	2.3	5
15	1.4	3
16	5.6	12
17	14.5	31
18	13.1	28
19	14.0	30
20	13.6	29
21	10.3	22
22	7.5	16
23	6.5	14
24	2.3	5
25	2.3	5
26	2.3	5
27	2.3	5
28	0.9	2
29	<u>0.9</u>	<u>2</u>
Total	100.0	216

Note: Mean was 19.9; S.D. = 3.1

Table 1.34. SINGLE MOTHERS (AGES 16-34): AGE BECAME A PARENT BY BACKGROUND AND CURRENT DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

ALL		FAMILY OF ORIGIN TYPE		RACE		MARITAL STATUS			
		Natural Parents	Other	White	Other	Divorced	Never Married	Separated	Widowed
(N=214)	(N=135)	(N=79)	(N=147)	(N=67)	(N=68)	(N=105)	(N=32)	(N=9)	
Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
AGE BECAME A PARENT									
14-17	23.8	<u>19.3</u>	<u>31.6</u>	<u>17.7</u>	<u>37.3</u>	16.2	30.5	18.8	22.2
18-19	27.1	<u>19.3</u>	<u>40.5</u>	<u>22.4</u>	<u>37.3</u>	22.1	27.6	37.5	22.2
20-22	31.3	<u>38.5</u>	<u>19.0</u>	<u>36.1</u>	<u>20.9</u>	30.9	32.4	31.3	22.2
23+	<u>17.8</u>	<u>23.0</u>	<u>8.9</u>	<u>23.8</u>	<u>4.5</u>	<u>30.9</u>	<u>9.5</u>	<u>12.5</u>	<u>33.3</u>
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: Underlined percentages signify significant differences at the .01 level.

Significance test for family of origin type: chi square = 23.16; df = 3; $p < .0001$

Significance test for race: chi square = 24.26; df = 3; $p < .0001$

Significance test for marital status (4 groups): chi square = 18.59; df = 9; NS

Significance test for marital status (divorced vs. separated vs. never married): chi square = 17.38; df = 6; $p < .01$

Table 1.35. SINGLE MOTHERS (AGES 16-34): AGE BECAME A PARENT BY FAMILY OF ORIGIN CHARACTERISTICS

Age Became a Parent	Socioeconomic Status*			Number of Siblings			Age Moved Out on Own		
	Mean	(S.D.)	Number	Mean	(S.D.)	Number	Mean	(S.D.)	Number
14-17	36.2	(12.6)	42	4.6	(3.1)	51	<u>16.8</u>	(1.9)	47
18-19	35.5	(12.4)	45	4.8	(3.3)	58	<u>17.7</u>	(1.5)	56
20-22	38.1	(14.5)	63	4.4	(2.4)	67	<u>18.3</u>	(1.4)	65
23+	<u>41.4</u>	<u>(13.5)</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>4.7</u>	<u>(2.9)</u>	<u>38</u>	<u>19.4</u>	<u>(2.8)</u>	<u>37</u>
Total	37.7	(13.5)	185	4.6	(2.9)	214	18.0	(2.0)	205

* Measured by occupational prestige ranking of respondent's father's (or father substitute's) occupation or, if no father present, mother's occupation while respondent was growing up (ages 6-16). Rankings, based on occupation prestige scores developed by Paul Siegel, were drawn from Hauser and Featherman (1977). Respondents without a working parent are excluded.

Note: Underlined mean scores indicate significant differences at the .01 level using the F-Test.

SES: $F = 1.46$; $df = 3, 181$; NS

Number of siblings: $F = .20$; $df = 3, 210$; NS

Age moved out: $F = 14.82$; $df = 3, 201$; $p < .0001$

older, and 82 percent became parents when they were age 18 or over. The majority of racial minority single mothers, 75 percent, in contrast, were teenagers when they had their first child; and 37 percent, compared with 18 percent for White single mothers, were minor mothers (ages 14-17) when they had their first child. The median age for Whites was 20.2 compared with a median age of 18.2 for racial minorities. **Table 1.34** also shows that never married single mothers were more likely than divorced single mothers to become a parent as teenagers and more likely than divorced and separated single mothers to become a parent as minors -- 31 percent for never married compared to 16 percent for divorced and 19 percent for separated.

Teenage Motherhood Related to Socioeconomic Disadvantages

Becoming a parent as a teenager has important implications for the future social adjustment of single mothers and will be examined in more detail in later chapters. For now, **Table 1.36** shows the educational and economic disadvantages teenage mothers, especially minor mothers (ages 14-17), encountered compared to single mothers who had their first child at the age of 20 or older.

Single mothers who became parents as teenagers had lower educational attainment levels than other single mothers. Nearly half (47 percent) of those who become parents at ages 14 to 17 did not complete high school. One-third of those who became parents at age 18 or 19 did not complete high school. Much lower percentages of those who became parents at age 20 to 22 and 23 or older did not complete high school -- 10 percent and 6 percent respectively (see **Table 1.36**). Those who became parents at older ages were more likely to have attended college. Nearly half (49 percent) of those who became parents at age 23 or older had attended some college, while only 10 percent of those who became parents as minors (ages 14 to 17) had attended college. This analysis was conducted for single mothers ages 25 to 34 at the time of the survey.

Respondents who became parents as teenagers were more likely than those who became parents in their twenties to be out of the labor force (59 percent for ages 14-17 compared with 29 percent for ages 23 and older, for example). Teenage mothers were also more likely than older first-time mothers to be receiving AFDC when surveyed. Only respondents who became parents at ages 23 and older were not receiving AFDC in greater proportion than receiving AFDC (see **Table 1.36**). The age at which respondents became parents was not significantly related to their annual incomes.

SINGLE MOTHERS (AGES 16-34):
Table 1.36. EDUCATIONAL AND ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS BY AGE BECAME A PARENT

	AGE BECAME A PARENT			
	14-17	18-19	20-22	23+
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT (Ages 25-34 only)	(N=30) Percent	(N=30) Percent	(N=51) Percent	(N=35) Percent
Less than High School	<u>46.7</u>	<u>33.3</u>	<u>9.8</u>	<u>5.7</u>
High School Graduate	<u>43.3</u>	<u>46.7</u>	<u>68.6</u>	<u>45.7</u>
Attended College+	<u>10.0</u>	<u>20.0</u>	<u>21.6</u>	<u>48.6</u>
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
EMPLOYMENT STATUS	(N=51) Percent	(N=57) Percent	(N=67) Percent	(N=38) Percent
In labor force	<u>41.2</u>	<u>40.4</u>	<u>56.7</u>	<u>71.1</u>
Not in labor force	<u>58.8</u>	<u>59.6</u>	<u>43.3</u>	<u>28.9</u>
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
AFDC STATUS ^a	(N=51) Percent	(N=58) Percent	(N=67) Percent	(N=38) Percent
Yes	<u>74.5</u>	<u>77.6</u>	<u>61.2</u>	<u>44.7</u>
No	<u>25.5</u>	<u>22.4</u>	<u>38.8</u>	<u>55.3</u>
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
ANNUAL INCOME	(N=49) Percent	(N=48) Percent	(N=66) Percent	(N=38) Percent
Less than \$6,000	<u>63.3</u>	<u>70.7</u>	<u>59.1</u>	<u>47.4</u>
\$6,000 - \$14,000	<u>16.3</u>	<u>19.0</u>	<u>21.2</u>	<u>23.7</u>
\$14,000+	<u>20.4</u>	<u>10.3</u>	<u>19.7</u>	<u>28.9</u>
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

^a Receiving AFDC when surveyed

Note: Underlined percentages signify significant differences at the .01 level.

Significance test for education: chi square = 32.60; df = 6; p < .0001

Significance test for employment status: chi square = 11.55; df = 3; p < .01

Significance test for AFDC status: chi square = 13.44; df = 3; p < .01

Significance test for income: chi square = 7.14; df = 6; NS

Negative Economic Consequences Greater for Unmarried Teenage Mothers Than for Married Teenage Mothers

To repeat, the majority of single mothers currently ages 16 to 34 who became parents as teenagers were receiving AFDC assistance and were not in the labor force. Respondents who became parents as teenagers were also more likely than those who became parents at age 20 or older to be unmarried at the time of the birth (76 percent compared with 50 percent). **Table 1.37** compares the current economic characteristics of respondents by whether they were unmarried or married when they became parents for the first time. This analysis was conducted separately for those who became parents as teenagers and for those who became parents at age 20 or older.

The economic prospects for the single mothers who were married teenagers when they had their first child were better than the economic prospects for those who were not married. For example, respondents who were married when they became teenage mothers were more likely than respondents who were unmarried when they became teenage mothers to be in the labor force (69 percent vs. 32 percent) and less likely to be receiving AFDC when surveyed (46 percent vs. 86 percent). Unmarried and married teenage mothers did not differ significantly in educational attainment levels, however.

The current economic characteristics of respondents who became parents at age 20 or older did not differ significantly by their marital status. It appears, however, that respondents who were married when they became parents at age 20 or older also fared better economically than those who were not married. Married parents, for example, appeared less likely than unmarried parents to have been receiving AFDC when surveyed and to have incomes of less than \$8,000 (see **Table 1.37**).

Table 1.37 also shows that the economic differences between respondents who became parents as teenagers and those who became parents at age 20 or older were more pronounced among those who were unmarried when they became parents than among those who were married when they became parents. For example, among those who were married when they became parents, those who were teenagers were as likely as those who were age 20 or older when their first child was born to be in the labor force (69 percent vs. 68 percent) and to be receiving AFDC when surveyed (46 percent vs. 47 percent). Among those who were unmarried when they became parents, however, those who were teenagers appeared less likely than those who were age 20 or older to be in the labor force (32 percent vs. 56 percent) and more likely to be receiving AFDC when surveyed (86 percent vs. 64

SINGLE MOTHERS (AGES 16-34): CURRENT ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS BY
Table 1.37. AGE AND MARITAL STATUS WHEN BECAME A PARENT

	TEENAGE PARENT (14-19)		AGE 20+ PARENT	
	Unmarried	Married	Unmarried	Married
	(N=42)	(N=18)	(N=40)	(N=46)
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT (Age 25-34 Only)	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Less than high school	45.2	27.8	7.5	8.7
High school graduate	40.5	55.6	67.5	52.2
Attended college+	14.3	16.7	25.0	39.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	(N=82)	(N=26)	(N=52)	(N=53)
EMPLOYMENT STATUS	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
In labor force	31.7	69.2	55.8	67.9
Not in labor force	68.3	30.8	44.2	32.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	(N=82)	(N=26)	(N=52)	(N=53)
AFDC STATUS	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Yes	85.5	46.2	63.5	47.2
No	14.5	53.8	36.5	52.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	(N=82)	(N=26)	(N=52)	(N=53)
ANNUAL INCOME	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Less than \$8,000	79.0	30.8	64.7	45.3
\$8,000 - \$14,000	12.3	34.6	15.7	28.3
\$14,000+	8.6	34.6	19.6	26.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: Underlined percentages signify significant differences between married and unmarried groups at the .01 level.

Note: Teenage unmarried/married differences:

Significance test for education (25+ only): chi square = 1.64; df = 2; NS

Significance test for employment status: corrected chi square = 10.01; df = 1; p < .01

Significance test for AFDC: corrected chi square = 14.81; df = 1; p < .001

Significance test for income: chi square = 21.18; df = 2; p < .001

Note: Age 20+ unmarried/married differences: All NS

percent). Educational attainment differences, finally, were more a function of the age respondents became parents than their marital status at the time. Those who became parents as teenagers, to repeat, had lower educational levels than those who became parents at age 20 or older among married as well as among unmarried first-time parents.

Age of First Birth Related to Age Own Mother Had First Child

The age of first birth for single mothers (ages 16 to 34 when surveyed) was related to the age of first birth for those respondents' own mothers. The majority, 58 percent, of single mothers who were teenagers when they had their first child were the daughters of mothers who also had their first child before they turned twenty years old. Similarly, the majority, 69 percent, of single mothers who were 20 years old or older when they had their first child were the daughters of women who also had their first child beyond their teen years.¹⁹

CHILDBEARING AND MARRIAGE

The tie between childbearing and marriage among single mothers, especially for young women and racial minorities, was not particularly strong. For example, in addition to never married mothers, 23 percent of the divorced, separated, and widowed mothers ages 16-34 had a child before they were married. In all, 60 percent of single mothers ages 16 to 34 were unmarried when they had their first child. Those younger than age 20 were more likely than those age 20 or older to have had their first child while unmarried -- 71 percent to 50 percent.²⁰ Further evidence for the weak relationship between having children and marriage can also be seen in the planned and multiple births to never married single mothers as well as in the births to divorced, separated, and widowed mothers both before they were married and after they became single again.

About a third of never married mothers reported planning to have all (24 percent) or some (10 percent) of the children they had. It appeared that the younger never married mothers purported to have planned more than the older

¹⁹ Significance test for age had first child: corrected chi square = 12.04; df = 1; p < .001. Pearson correlation coefficient r = .22; df = 190; p < .01.

²⁰ Significance test for age became parent: corrected chi square = 9.10; df = 1; p < .01.

ones. Further, a sizeable proportion of never married mothers, 42 percent, had more than one child. About three-quarters of these never married mothers with two or more children had their youngest child no more than three years after having their previous child. The mean age difference between their two youngest children was 2.8 years. About 17 percent of never married mothers had two children under two years old. The majority (83 percent) of never married mothers with two or more children were receiving AFDC when their youngest child was born. Never married racial minority mothers were more likely than never married White mothers to have two or more children -- 70 percent compared with 29 percent (see **Table 1.38**). Never married mothers with two or more children were less likely than those with one child to be working and more likely to be receiving AFDC (see **Table 1.39**). Those with two or more children also appeared to be less likely to have completed high school.

In addition to the 23 percent of divorced, separated, and widowed single mothers ages 16 to 34 who had at least one child before they were married, 18 percent of this group of single mothers had at least one child after becoming single parents. In all, 35 percent of the divorced, separated, and widowed single mothers ages 16 to 34 had children while they were single -- either before marriage or after becoming a single parent. Black single mothers appeared more likely than White single mothers and those from other racial groups to have had a child after becoming a single parent (47 percent compared with 12 percent and 14 percent, respectively).²¹ Having a child after becoming a single mother was not associated with employment status or AFDC status in this group of divorced, separated, and widowed single mothers ages 16 to 34. The numbers here are small and must be interpreted with caution, however.

AGE FIRST MARRIED (DIVORCED AND SEPARATED MOTHERS ONLY)

Divorced and separated respondents were married for the first time at a median age of 19.5, ranging from ages 13 to 32. **Table 1.40** shows that 50 percent of the divorced and separated respondents were married as teenagers, including 15 percent who were married as minors (ages 13-17). The median age of marriage was 19.4 for divorced respondents and 19.8 for separated respondents. Comparisons with the Young Adult Study revealed that

²¹ Significance test for race (three groups): chi square = 13.43; df = 2; p < .01.

Table 1.38. NEVER MARRIED MOTHERS: NUMBER OF CHILDREN BY DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

	ALL	AGE			RACE		AGE OF YOUNGEST	
		16-24	25-34	35+	White	Other	Under 6	6 or older
	(N=119) Percent	(N=46) Percent	(N=59) Percent	(N=14) Percent	(N=82) Percent	(N=37) Percent	(N=76) Percent	(N=43) Percent
One Child	58.0	69.6	49.2	57.1	<u>70.7</u>	<u>29.7</u>	59.2	55.8
Two or More Children	<u>42.0</u>	<u>30.4</u>	<u>50.8</u>	<u>42.9</u>	<u>29.3</u>	<u>70.3</u>	<u>40.8</u>	<u>44.2</u>
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: Underlined percentages signify significant differences at the .01 level.

Note: Significance test for age: chi square = 4.43; df = 2; NS

Significance test for race: corrected chi square = 15.95; df = 1; $p < .001$

Significance test for age of youngest: corrected chi square = .03; df = 1; NS

NEVER MARRIED MOTHERS:
Table 1.39. SOCIOECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS BY NUMBER OF CHILDREN

	One Child	Two or More Children
<u>EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT (Ages 25+ Only)</u>	<u>(N=37)</u>	<u>(N=36)</u>
	Percent	Percent
Less than High School	13.5	38.9
High School Graduate	62.2	52.8
College+	<u>24.3</u>	<u>8.3</u>
Total	100.0	100.0
<u>EMPLOYMENT STATUS</u>	<u>(N=69)</u>	<u>(N=50)</u>
	Percent	Percent
Full-time	<u>33.3</u>	<u>8.0</u>
Part-time	<u>11.6</u>	<u>8.0</u>
Unemployed	<u>10.1</u>	<u>10.0</u>
Not in Labor Force	<u>44.9</u>	<u>74.0</u>
Total	100.0	100.0
<u>AFDC STATUS</u>	<u>(N=69)</u>	<u>(N=50)</u>
	Percent	Percent
Yes	<u>65.2</u>	<u>96.0</u>
No	<u>34.8</u>	<u>4.0</u>
Total	100.0	100.0
<u>ANNUAL INCOME</u>	<u>(N=68)</u>	<u>(N=49)</u>
	Percent	Percent
Less than \$8,000	69.1	85.7
\$8,000 - \$14,000	11.8	8.2
\$14,000 +	<u>19.1</u>	<u>6.1</u>
Total	100.0	100.0

Note: Underlined percentages signify significant differences between groups at the .01 level.

Significance test for education: chi square = 7.63; df = 2; NS

Significance test for employment status: chi square = 12.86; df = 3;
p < .01

Significance test for AFDC Status: corrected chi square = 14.34; df = 1;
p < .001

Significance test for income: chi square = 4.91; df = 2; NS

DIVORCED AND SEPARATED MOTHERS:
Table 1.40. AGE FIRST MARRIED

<u>AGES</u>	<u>PERCENT</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>
13-17	15.0	35
18-19	35.0	82
20-22	31.2	73
23+	<u>18.8</u>	<u>44</u>
Total	100.0	234

Mean = 20.1; S.D. = 3.0

divorced/separated respondents in this study (ages 19 to 34) tended to marry at younger ages than young adults generally.

The age at which divorced and separated mothers were first married was not significantly related to their demographic characteristics (race, marital status, age of youngest child) or to the demographic characteristics of their families of origin (natural two parent or other family of origin, socioeconomic status, number of siblings). It appeared, however, that racial minority respondents and those who were raised in larger families were more likely than other respondents to have been married for the first time at ages 17 or younger.

The age at which divorced and separated mothers were first married was also not significantly related to later employment status, AFDC status, or income. It appeared, though, that the younger the age of first marriage, the greater the likelihood of receiving AFDC when surveyed. The age of first marriage, was, however, significantly related to educational attainment (see **Table 1.41**). Divorced and separated respondents age 25 and older who were first married as teenagers (ages 13-19) were more likely to have less than a high school education (22 percent). Conversely, those who were first married at age 20 or older were more likely to have at least some college education (49 percent).

NUMBER OF TIMES MARRIED (DIVORCED AND SEPARATED MOTHERS ONLY)

The vast majority, 85 percent, of divorced and separated single mothers in this study married just once. The single mothers who had married more than once did not significantly differ from those who had married just once on demographic or economic characteristics (i.e., age, race, age of youngest child, educational attainment, AFDC status, employment status, or income).

DIVORCED MOTHERS ONLY: NUMBER OF TIMES DIVORCED AND YEARS MARRIED TO LAST SPOUSE

Most (87 percent) of the divorced respondents had been divorced only once; although the range was from 1 to 4 divorces in the sample.

Divorced single mothers were divorced after anywhere from less than a year up to 33 years of marriage. The median length of marriages that ended in divorce was 7.5 years. In general, the number of years divorced respondents were married to their spouse was not significantly related to current economic

DIVORCED AND SEPARATED MOTHERS:
Table 1.41. EDUCATIONAL AND ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS BY AGE FIRST MARRIED

	AGE FIRST MARRIED	
	13-19	20+
	(N=117)	(N=117)
	Percent	Percent
<u>EMPLOYMENT STATUS</u>		
In labor force	67.2	75.0
Not in labor force	<u>32.8</u>	<u>25.0</u>
Total	100.0	100.0
<u>AFDC STATUS</u>		
Yes	48.7	37.6
No	<u>51.3</u>	<u>62.4</u>
Total	100.0	100.0
<u>ANNUAL INCOME</u>		
Less than \$8,000	43.6	34.2
\$8,000-\$14,000	26.5	28.2
\$14,000+	<u>29.9</u>	<u>37.6</u>
Total	100.0	100.0
<u>EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT</u> (Ages 25 and Older Only)		
	(N=101) Percent	(N=111) Percent
Less than High School	<u>21.8</u>	<u>10.8</u>
High School Graduate	<u>58.4</u>	<u>40.5</u>
Attended College+	<u>19.8</u>	<u>48.6</u>
Total	100.0	100.0

Note: Underlined percentages signify significant differences among age groups at the .01 level.

Note: Significance test for employment status: corrected chi square = 1.34; df = 1; NS

Significance test for AFDC status: corrected chi square = 2.51; df = 1; NS

Significance test for income: chi square = 2.42; df = 2; NS

Significance test for education: chi square = 20.02; df = 2; p < .0001

status. However, it appeared that those divorced after a shorter length of time were more likely to be receiving AFDC.

Few Divorced Single Mothers Feel That Their Last Marriage Could Have Been Saved

Divorced single mothers were asked, "Looking back to your marriage, do you feel that it had a chance of being saved?" Nearly three-quarters of them (73 percent) responded "no." Those who felt that their marriages could have been saved and those who felt that their marriages could not have been saved did not significantly differ on demographic characteristics. Single mothers with higher educational levels, however, appeared to feel that their marriages could have been saved somewhat more than those with lower educational levels.

Divorced single mothers who felt that their last marriages could have been saved were also asked what kind of help could have saved their marriages if it would have been available. Responses, grouped into several categories, fell most often into the "some type of counseling," "help with alcohol/drugs," and "changes in counseling" categories (see Table 1.42).

THE LENGTH OF SINGLE PARENT STATUS

As part of the research design, single parents had to have been a single parent for at least 12 months. Female respondents had been single parents (the most recent time) from one year to 23 years (12-276 months). The median length of time was 5.0 years. (The mean was 6.2 years.) The median for single fathers was 3.0 years. No fathers had been single parents for longer than 10 years (see Table 1.43).

Single mothers who had been single parents more than once were single parents the first time from 1 month to 16 years. The median for these 66 multiple-time single mothers was 3.0 years. (The mean was 3.9 years).

Length of Single Parent Status Related to Most Demographic Characteristics but not Related to Economic Characteristics

The number of years that a respondent had been a single parent the most recent time was related to marital status. The majority of separated respondents had been single mothers for one or two years, while the majority of never married and widowed respondents and nearly half of divorced respondents (47 percent) had been single mothers for five or more years. The median for separated respondents was 2.0 years; the median for divorced and widowed

Table 1.42. HELP THAT COULD HAVE SAVED MARRIAGE IF AVAILABLE*

	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Number</u>
Counseling	29.2	19
Help with alcohol/drugs	15.4	10
Change in counseling	10.8	7
Change in spouse	9.2	6
Better communication	6.2	4
Counseling and better communication	4.6	3
Help with alcohol and counseling	1.5	1
Other	20.0	13
Do not know	<u>3.0</u>	<u>2</u>
Total	100.0	65

* Responses from divorced respondents who felt that their last marriage had a chance of being saved.

Table 1.43. LENGTH OF MOST RECENT SINGLE PARENT STATUS BY SEX

	FEMALE		MALE	
	(N=387)		(N=34)	
	Percent	Number	Percent	Number
<u>NUMBER OF MONTHS</u>				
12-24	20.4	79	35.3	12
25-60	34.1	132	35.3	12
61-120	27.6	107	29.4	10
121-180	13.2	51	0.0	0
181+	<u>4.7</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>0.0</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	100.0	387	100.0	34

respondents was 5.0 years, while the median for never married respondents was 6.0 years.²² The number of years that a respondent had been a single parent was also logically related to other time variables -- age, the age of the youngest child at home, and the length of time for receiving AFDC. The length of single parent status, however, was not significantly related to race, educational attainment, employment status, AFDC status, or income.

Length of Separation for Separated Mothers Related to Race

About two-thirds of the separated mothers were legally separated from their husbands. The other third cited various answers to why their spouse was absent including, most often, "no reason" and "relationship breakdown." Twenty percent (N=4) of those who were not legally separated reported that their husbands were in prison.

The length of separation for separated mothers was not significantly related to their age, the age of their youngest child, educational attainment, employment status, AFDC status, or income. Black single mothers, however, were more likely than White single mothers and single mothers from other racial groups to be separated for long periods of time.²³

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS WHEN SINGLE PARENTHOOD BEGAN

AGE BECAME A SINGLE PARENT

Never Married Mothers

Never married mothers had a median age of 19.3 years when they became parents (and therefore single parents). The age when they became single parents ranged from 14 to 40 years. Over half, 53 percent, were teenagers when they became single parents, including 28 percent who were minors (ages 14 to 17). Eighty-seven percent became single parents before the age of 25. Only 3 percent were age 30 or older (see **Table 1.44**).

²² Marital status, F-Test for difference between means: $F = 7.07$; $df = 3$, 383; $p < .001$.

²³ Significance test for difference between means, race (three groups): $F = 16.55$; $df = 2, 54$; $p < .0001$.

²⁴ For those ages 16 to 34, divorced mothers had a median age of 20.3 and separated mothers had a median age of 19.2 when they became parents.

Table 1.44. NEVER MARRIED MOTHERS: AGE BECAME A SINGLE PARENT

	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Number</u>
14	4.2	5
15	2.5	3
16	5.0	6
17	16.0	19
18	12.6	15
19	12.6	15
20	11.8	14
21	12.6	15
22	5.9	7
23	3.4	4
24	0.8	1
25	2.5	3
26	2.5	3
27	2.5	3
28	1.7	2
29	0.0	0
30	0.0	0
31	0.8	1
32	0.0	0
33	0.0	0
34	0.8	1
35	0.0	0
36	0.8	1
37	0.0	0
38	0.0	0
39	0.0	0
40	<u>0.8</u>	<u>1</u>
Total	100.0	119

Divorced and Separated Mothers (Single Parents One Time Only)

Divorced mothers had a median age of 29.1 and separated mothers had a median age of 29.6 when they became single parents.²⁴ The range for divorced mothers was 18 to 50 years old. The range for separated mothers was 19 to 45 years old.

The age at which divorced and separated respondents became single parents, for those who have become single parents just once, was not related to race, marital status, educational attainment or any current economic characteristics. As might be expected, those who were divorced and separated at younger ages were more likely to have a preschool child, both at the time that single parenthood began and at the time of this study (see **Table 1.45**).

Divorced and Separated Mothers (Single Parents More Than Once)

Twenty-four percent of the divorced and separated single mothers in this study had been single parents more than once. They became single parents the most recent time at about the same median age as those who have been single parents just once -- 29.3 years old for divorced and 29.6 years old for separated. Both divorced and separated mothers had a median age of 20.8 when they became single parents for the first time, ranging from age 15 to 37.

Census figures have shown that single parenthood is more common among racial minority families than among White families. About 19 percent of White families with children under 18 in Ramsey County, for example, were single parent families in 1980 compared to 40 percent of families from other racial groups. This relatively high proportion of single parent families among racial minorities was also reflected in the multiple times that minority single mothers had been single parents. Forty-one percent of racial minority divorced and separated mothers compared with 18 percent of their White counterparts had been a single parent at least twice.²⁵

Among divorced and separated mothers, multiple and one-time single parents did not significantly differ in the age of the youngest child at home, both at present and when they became single parents the most recent time. They also did not differ significantly in their educational attainment or income levels.

²⁵ Significance test for race: corrected chi square = 10.95; df = 1; p < .001.

DIVORCED AND SEPARATED MOTHERS: DEMOGRAPHIC
Table 1.45. CHARACTERISTICS BY AGE BECAME A SINGLE PARENT^a

	18-24	25-29	30+
	(N=48)	(N=44)	(N=86)
	Percent	Percent	Percent
AGE OF YOUNGEST WHEN BECAME SINGLE PARENT			
0-5	<u>100.0</u>	<u>88.4</u>	<u>57.0</u>
6+	<u>0</u>	<u>11.6</u>	<u>43.0</u>
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
AGE OF YOUNGEST AT PRESENT			
0-5	<u>62.5</u>	<u>31.8</u>	<u>12.8</u>
6+	<u>37.5</u>	<u>68.2</u>	<u>87.2</u>
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

^a Includes only those who have been single parents one time only.

Note: Underlined percentages signify significant differences at the .01 level.

Significance test for youngest (when became single parent):
chi square = 34.74; df = 2; p < .0001

Significance test for youngest (present): chi square = 35.68;
df = 2; p < .0001

Single mothers who had been single parents more than once, however, were more likely than first-time single parents to be out of the labor force and to be receiving AFDC when surveyed (see **Table 1.46**). The majority (53 percent) of respondents who had been single parents more than once were Group 2 mothers -- the non-working, AFDC group. In contrast, one-time single parents were more likely to be in the group of single mothers who were not receiving AFDC (64 percent).

AGE OF YOUNGEST CHILD WHEN DIVORCED AND SEPARATED PARENTS BECAME SINGLE

When divorced and separated single mothers began their current single parent status, the median age of their youngest child at the time was 2.3 years old. The ages of the youngest children ranged from infancy to 15 years old. **Table 1.47** shows that three-quarters of the newly divorced and separated single mothers were parents of at least one preschool child when they first or most recently became single parents. Over one-quarter (28 percent) had children younger than one year old as their youngest child when they became single parents.

The age of the youngest child when divorced and separated female respondents became single parents was not related to the respondent's educational attainment, employment status, or income at the time of the survey. However, divorced and separated respondents who became single parents when they had a preschool child at home were more likely than those with school age children only to be receiving AFDC when surveyed -- 50 percent compared with 21 percent.²⁶

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

CURRENT STATUS

The majority of single parents in the study sample were female and Caucasian. The median age was 33.7. Divorce was their most common route to single parenthood. The majority (81 percent) of the families had one or two children, including 47 percent with only one child. For sixty percent of the families, the youngest child at home was of school age (age 6 or older).

²⁶ Significance test for AFDC status (yes vs. no): corrected chi square = 12.69; df = 1; $p < .001$.

DIVORCED AND SEPARATED SINGLE MOTHERS: SOCIAL AND
Table 1.46. ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS BY TIMES HAVE BEEN SINGLE PARENT

	ONCE	TWO OR MORE TIMES
	(N=160)	(N=52)
<u>EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT</u> (Age 25+ Only)	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Less than High School	13.7	23.1
High School Graduate	48.1	51.9
College+	38.1	25.0
Total	100.0	100.0
	(N=178)	(N=56)
<u>EMPLOYMENT STATUS</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Full-time	54.8	32.7
Part-time	13.6	9.1
Unemployed	7.3	14.5
Not in Labor Force	24.3	43.6
Total	100.0	100.0
	(N=178)	(N=56)
<u>AFDC STATUS</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Yes	36.0	66.1
No	64.0	33.9
Total	100.0	100.0
	(N=178)	(N=56)
<u>ANNUAL INCOME</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Less than \$8,000	36.0	48.2
\$8,000-\$14,000	26.4	30.4
\$14,000+	37.6	21.4
Total	100.0	100.0
	(N=178)	(N=56)
<u>LABOR FORCE AND</u> <u>AFDC PARTICIPATION</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Group 1: No AFDC	64.4	34.5
Group 2: Non-working/AFDC	28.2	52.7
Group 3: Working/AFDC	7.3	12.7
Total	100.0	100.0

Note: Significance test for education: chi square = 4.18; df = 2; NS
 Significance test for employment status: chi square = 12.64;
 df = 1; p < .001
 Significance test for AFDC Status: corrected chi square = 14.55;
 df = 1; p < .001
 Significance test for income: chi square = 5.21; df = 2; NS
 Significance test for Groups 1, 2, 3: chi square = 15.32;
 df = 2; p < .001

DIVORCED AND SEPARATED MOTHERS:
AGE OF YOUNGEST CHILD WHEN MOTHER BECAME
Table 1.47. SINGLE PARENT^a

<u>Age of Youngest</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Number</u>
0-2	52.0	119
3-5	23.6	54
6-9	15.3	35
10-14	8.7	20
15-17	0.4	1
Total	100.0	229

^a Refers to the most recent time for those who have been single parents more than once.

Note: Mean = 3.5
S.D. = 3.7
Median = 2.33

Eighty percent of single mothers graduated from high school; 30 percent had at least some college education, but 20 percent had less than a high school education. Forty-one percent of single mothers worked full-time, and 38 percent were not in the labor force. Half of the single mothers had incomes of less than \$8,000 a year. More than half (53 percent) were receiving AFDC at the time of this study. Among current AFDC recipients, 73 percent had received AFDC for as long as they had been single parents.

The age of the youngest child at home was found to be strongly related to a number of demographic characteristics. Single mothers younger than age 30, never married, and racial minorities were more likely than other single mothers to have a preschool child (ages 5 and younger) as their youngest child at home.

Among single mothers ages 25 and older, White and divorced mothers were more likely than other single mothers to have completed high school. Educational attainment levels, moreover, were found to be strongly related to employment status, AFDC status, and income. The majority of single mothers age 25 or older who had not completed high school were not in the labor force, received AFDC assistance at the time of this study, and had incomes of less than \$8,000 a year.

Employment status, AFDC status, and income, finally, were related to the demographic characteristics of single mothers. Those age 35 or older, White, divorced, and those whose youngest child was school-aged (age 6 or older) were more likely than other single mothers to be employed full-time, to not receive AFDC, and to have annual incomes of \$14,000 or more.²⁷ Conversely, younger single mothers, racial minorities, never married, and mothers of preschoolers (age 5 or younger) were more likely to be out of the labor force or unemployed, to be receiving AFDC, and to have annual incomes of less than \$8,000.

BACKGROUNDS

The majority (66 percent) of single parents in this study were raised most of the time between the ages of 6 and 16 by both natural parents. Never married and racial minority single mothers were less likely to have been raised by both natural parents, however.

²⁷ Separated and widowed single mothers tended to resemble divorced single mothers with respect to employment status, AFDC status, and income.

Fifty-one percent of single mothers, ages 16 to 34 when surveyed, became parents as teenagers (ages 14-19), including nearly a quarter who were minors (ages 14-17) when they had their first child. Those not raised by both natural parents, those whose own mothers were teenage mothers, and never married females were more likely to have had their first child as teenagers. Racial minority females gave birth to their first child, on average, in their teen years and at earlier ages than White females. The median age of first birth for racial minorities was 18.2 compared with a median age of 20.2 for Whites.

Female respondents who became parents as teenagers had lower educational levels, were less likely to be in the labor force, and were more likely to be receiving AFDC when surveyed. Nearly half of those ages 25 to 34 at the time of this survey who became parents at ages 14-17 and one-third of those who became parents for the first time at ages 18 or 19, for example, did not complete high school. Among those who became parents as teenagers, those who were married at the time fared better economically.

The findings reveal a weak relationship between marriage and childbearing. Nearly a third of the single mothers were never married mothers; 42 percent of these women had two or more children. Thirty-five percent of the divorced, separated, and widowed single mothers ages 16 to 34 had children while single - either before marriage or after becoming a single parent. Unmarried childbearing was more likely among the young and racial minorities in this study. Among the never married, having more than one child was associated with not working and receiving AFDC.

Divorced and separated single mothers tended to be married at young ages; half were married as teenagers, including 15 percent who were married as minors (ages 13-17). Among those age 25 and older, those who first married as teenagers were less likely to have completed high school compared with those who married at later ages.

The length of single parent status was not associated with single parents' current economic characteristics. The median length of single parent status for separated respondents was 2.0 years, the median for divorced and widowed respondents was 5.0 years, and the median for never married respondents was 6.0 years. (Respondents had to have been single parents for at least a year to be eligible for the survey.)

Nearly a quarter of divorced and separated mothers had been a single parent more than once. Among divorced and separated mothers, racial minorities were more likely than Whites to have been a single parent multiple times -- 41

percent compared with 18 percent. Multiple time single parents were less likely to be in the labor force and more likely to be receiving AFDC than one-time only single parents.

Seventy-six percent of divorced and separated mothers had a preschool child as their youngest child at home at the time they became single parents, including more than a quarter who had a child less than 1 year old. The median age of the youngest child at the beginning of single parent status for divorced and separated mothers was 2.3 years. Those who had preschool children at home when they became single parents were more likely to be receiving AFDC when surveyed.

CONCLUSIONS

The increase in single parent families since 1970 has led to a growing awareness and concern about their needs and living conditions. The tendency has been to focus on the plight of single mothers, particularly divorced mothers. This study, which examines the characteristics of single parent families without restriction to type or economic status, reveals that single parent families are a diverse group both demographically and economically. For human service purposes, then, distinguishing among the various segments of the single parent family population is essential so that the most vulnerable groups can be identified without exaggerating the disadvantages or ignoring the strengths of single parent families.

What are the likely characteristics of disadvantaged single parent families in Ramsey County? Single mothers tend to fare worse economically than single fathers. A later chapter will compare these two groups in more detail. The findings in this chapter indicate that single mothers who were teenagers when they had their first child, racial minority mothers, and never married mothers were more likely than other single mothers to have less than a high school education and, therefore, to be at risk economically. In addition to single mothers with those characteristics, those with preschool children were more likely than those with school age children to be out of the labor force, to be receiving AFDC, and to have annual incomes of less than \$8,000.

CHAPTER TWO

SINGLE MOTHERS:

EMPLOYMENT, AFDC, AND SELF-SUPPORT

In 1980, 21 percent of working mothers in Ramsey County were single mothers. Single mothers with dependent children were more likely than their married counterparts to be in the labor force, 71 percent compared with 60 percent. Those single mothers whose youngest child was age 6 or older were more likely than those with a preschool child to be in the labor force, 83 percent compared with 52 percent (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1983B).

Nationwide, likewise, 22 percent of working mothers were single mothers in 1980. Single mothers with dependent children were more likely than their married counterparts to be in the labor force, 67 percent versus 53 percent. Those whose youngest child was of school age were more likely than those with a preschool child to be in the labor force, 75 percent versus 55 percent (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1983C).

A third of the single parent families in Ramsey County received Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) in 1980 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1983A). The number of families receiving AFDC rose 43 percent in the county from 1970 to 1980, declined in 1982, but then increased slightly again in 1983 (Minnesota Department of Public Welfare, 1984).

The decline in the number of families receiving AFDC in 1982 was a result of federal AFDC policy and legislative changes that limited eligibility for working recipients. The objective was to help reduce the federal budget and to help promote self-support for working AFDC recipients by decreasing the amount of their assistance and limiting the duration of their guaranteed income. Before the policy changes, families with low job earnings and high work-related expenses (e.g., day care and transportation) could receive AFDC assistance. Working AFDC recipients were allowed to set aside a portion of their job earnings and to deduct reasonable work expenses for such items as day care and transportation before their AFDC grant amount was determined. The amount of AFDC assistance was gradually reduced as earnings rose and recipients were better able to support themselves financially. AFDC assistance could be continued indefinitely for those working in low-paying or part-time jobs. The

new policy that took effect in February, 1982, terminated eligibility for families whose gross income exceeded 150 percent of the state's standard of need,¹ curtailed assistance for employed AFDC recipients after 4 months, and increased the amount of job earnings that was deducted from the AFDC grant. The new rules also capped work expenses at \$75 per month for miscellaneous expenses and \$160 per child per month for day care. Many of those whose low job earnings made them eligible to receive AFDC before the changes were no longer eligible for AFDC (Franczyk and Sutherland, 1983; Sarri et al, 1984). A study of Minnesota AFDC recipients whose AFDC grants had been terminated in 1982 due to new eligibility requirements found that only 10 percent were receiving AFDC again one year later in 1983 (Moscovice and Craig, 1983).

The economic well-being of single mothers in the labor force and the economic dependence of single mothers out of the labor force and receiving AFDC have gained attention in recent years as the number of single parent families, particularly those headed by women, has grown. This chapter examines the characteristics and employment needs of both groups of single mothers. The examination of single mothers in the labor force includes a description of the jobs held by single mothers and a discussion of employed AFDC recipients, single mothers working full-time and not receiving AFDC yet having incomes of less than \$14,000, and unemployed single mothers. The examination of single mothers out of the labor force is limited to those who were receiving AFDC when surveyed. Single mothers with at least one preschooler and those whose youngest dependent child is of school age are examined separately for their work potential and employment barriers. The central issue of the chapter is the ability of single mothers to achieve financial independence. The analysis in this chapter is limited to single mothers because the achievement of financial independence is not an issue for most of the 34 single fathers who were employed full-time and did not receive AFDC. The employment needs of single fathers will be examined in a later chapter using data from a supplemental sample of single fathers.

¹ The standard of need, determined by each state and keyed to family size, is the amount of money considered necessary to meet minimal needs for food, clothing, and shelter.

EMPLOYED SINGLE MOTHERS

INTRODUCTION

At the time of this survey, 53 percent (N=206) of the single mothers were employed, 24 percent part-time (1-34 hours per week) and 76 percent full-time. Mothers with preschool children made up a quarter of the employed group, including 10 percent who had children age 2 or younger. As described in Chapter 1, those age 25 or older, White, divorced and widowed, and those without a preschool child at home were more likely than other single mothers to be employed (see **Table 1.18**). Those with a high school education or more were also more likely to be employed (see **Table 1.19**).

CHARACTERISTICS OF PART-TIME AND FULL-TIME EMPLOYED SINGLE MOTHERS

Among employed single mothers, those employed part-time were more likely to be younger than 25 than those employed full-time. Those employed part-time, moreover, were more likely to have a preschool child than those employed full-time. Part-time versus full-time employment was not associated with race, marital status (see **Table 2.1**), the number of children, educational attainment, or vocational training.

Most employed single mothers, part-time and full-time alike, have had just one or two different jobs in the past five years (see **Table 2.2**). Those currently employed part-time, however, have had significantly less full-time employment experience in the past five years than those currently employed full-time. More than half (52 percent) of those currently employed part-time had no full-time work experience in the past 5 years. In contrast, 71 percent of those currently employed full-time have been working full-time for all of the past 5 years (see **Table 2.2**).

HELP GETTING PRESENT JOB

Twenty-seven percent (N=55) of the single mothers who were employed at the time of this study received help in getting their jobs. **Table 2.3** shows that nearly half of those receiving help were helped by friends or family. Among the formal organizations and agencies that helped single mothers get their present jobs, the WIN program (15 percent) and the Minnesota State Job Service (13 percent) were cited by employed mothers most frequently.

Single mothers who reported receiving help in getting their present jobs did not significantly differ demographically or educationally from those who

EMPLOYED SINGLE MOTHERS:
Table 2.1. EMPLOYMENT STATUS BY DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

	Part-time ^a (N=48) Percent	Full-time (N=158) Percent
<u>ALL</u>	23.5	76.5
<u>AGE</u>		
16-24	<u>18.8</u>	<u>4.5</u>
25-34	<u>29.2</u>	<u>38.5</u>
35+	<u>52.1</u>	<u>57.1</u>
Total	100.0	100.0
<u>RACE</u>		
White	79.2	84.0
Other racial groups	20.8	16.0
Total	100.0	100.0
<u>MARITAL STATUS</u>		
Divorced	56.3	59.0
Never married	25.0	17.3
Separated	4.2	14.7
Widowed	14.6	9.0
Total	100.0	100.0
<u>AGE OF YOUNGEST CHILD</u>		
Ages 0-5	<u>43.8</u>	<u>19.9</u>
Ages 6-17	<u>56.3</u>	<u>80.1</u>
Total	100.0	100.0

^a Part-time is defined as 1-34 hours per week

Note: Underlined percentages indicate significant differences at the .01 level.

Note: Significance test for age: chi square = 10.56; df = 1; p < .01

Significance test for race: corrected chi square = .31; df = 1; NS

Significance test for marital status: chi square = 5.66; df = 3; NS

Significance test for age of youngest child: corrected chi square = 9.80; df = 1; p < .01

Table 2.2. EMPLOYED SINGLE MOTHERS: WORK HISTORY BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS

NUMBER OF JOBS IN PAST FIVE YEARS ^b	EMPLOYMENT STATUS	
	Part-time ^a	Full-time
	(N=48) Percent	(N=156) Percent
1	35.4	51.9
2	29.2	26.9
3	22.9	15.4
4+	12.5	5.7
Total	100.0	100.0

YEARS OF FULL-TIME WORK EXPERIENCE IN THE PAST FIVE YEARS		
0	52.1	4.5
1	12.5	5.8
2	16.7	3.2
3	2.1	7.7
4	0.0	7.7
5	16.7	71.2
Total	100.0	100.0

^a Part-time is defined as 1-34 hours per week

^b Includes full-time, part-time, and temporary employment

Note: Significance test for number of jobs, difference between means (part-time: mean = 2.3; S.D. = 1.7 vs. full-time: mean = 1.8; S.D. = 1.1): $F = 6.02$; $df = 1, 202$; NS

Significance test for full-time employment experience, difference between means (part-time: mean = 1.4; S.D. = 1.8 vs. full-time: mean = 4.2; S.D. = 1.5): $F = 124.72$; $df = 1, 202$; $p < .0001$

EMPLOYED SINGLE MOTHERS: WHERE OBTAINED HELP IN
Table 2.3. GETTING PRESENT JOB (MULTIPLE RESPONSES INCLUDED)

	Percent Reporting (N=55)
Friends	29.1
Family	18.2
WIN/AFDC	14.5
Minnesota State Job Service	12.7
Votech/TVI	5.5
At work	5.5
CETA	3.6
Ramsey Action Program (RAP)	3.6
Putting It All Together (PAT)	1.8
Church	1.8
Other	10.9

did not report receiving help. Those employed part-time rather than full-time appeared more likely to have been helped (40 percent vs. 21 percent). Those helped by family or friends did not differ significantly by demographic characteristics, education or employment status from those helped by formal organizations.

CHARACTERISTICS OF JOBS HELD BY SINGLE MOTHERS

This section describes the characteristics of the jobs held by single mothers -- occupational types, occupational status, occupational advancement, and fringe benefits.

Types of Occupations

Table 2.4 shows the types of jobs that single mothers held at the time of the survey. For those currently holding more than one job (10 percent of employed single mothers) only their main job is classified for purposes of the table. Forty-two percent were in clerical occupations; 21 percent were in service occupations; and 15 percent were in professional, technical, managerial, or administrative occupations.

Single mothers with less than a high school education (ages 25 and older) were more likely to be operatives or service workers, while those with high school educations or higher (ages 25 and older) were more likely to be clerical workers. Those working part-time were more likely to be service workers, while those working full-time were more likely to be clerical workers (see **Table 2.5**). Type of occupation, within these broad categories, did not vary by demographic characteristics or completion of technical training.

Table 2.6 shows that, according to the 1980 Census, the types of jobs held by single mothers were similar to the types of jobs held by all employed females in Ramsey County. It appears that single mothers tended to hold professional/technical positions less frequently than females in general, however.

Status Rankings of Current Occupations

The current occupations of single mothers were assigned occupational prestige scores or status rankings drawn from Hauser and Featherman (1977), who adapted Paul Siegel's occupational prestige rankings. Higher scores indicate more prestigious occupations. **Table 2.7** shows the average occupational status

Table 2.4. EMPLOYED SINGLE MOTHERS: TYPES OF OCCUPATIONS^a

	Number	Percent
<u>CLERICAL</u>		
Secretaries	26	12.7
Miscellaneous clerical	24	11.7
Computer operator	4	2.0
Postal clerk	4	2.0
Mail handler (non-post office)	3	1.5
Clerical supervisor	3	1.5
Bookkeeper	3	1.5
Typists	3	1.5
Other clerical (e.g., cashiers, teacher aid, receptionist)	16	7.8
Subtotal	86	42.0
<u>SERVICE</u>		
Nursing aide	7	3.4
Child care worker (private household)	7	3.4
Cook	6	2.9
Waitress	5	2.4
Housekeeper (private household)	5	2.4
Other Service Workers (e.g., food service worker; cosmetologist; child care worker, non-private household)	13	6.3
Subtotal	43	21.0
<u>PROFESSIONAL, MANAGER</u>		
Registered nurse, therapist	6	2.9
Teacher (prekindergarten to high school)	6	2.9
Sales manager (retail, non-retail)	5	2.4
Health, science technician	4	2.0
Computer specialist	2	1.0
Other professional (e.g., social worker, vocational counselor, public relations)	6	2.9
Other manager	2	1.0
Subtotal	31	15.1

Table 2.4. EMPLOYED SINGLE MOTHERS: TYPES OF OCCUPATIONS^a (continued)

<u>OPERATIVES</u>		
Assembler	5	2.4
Inspector	3	1.5
Machine ooperative	3	1.5
Dressmaker	2	1.0
Packer	2	1.0
Bus driver	1	0.5
Other operatives (e.g., filer, processor, stitcher)	3	1.5
Subtotal	19	9.3
<u>SALES</u>		
Sales representative	7	3.4
Real estate agent	2	1.0
Other sales	4	2.0
Subtotal	13	6.4
<u>CRAFTS</u>		
(e.g., metal molder, plumber, mechanic telephone repairer)	7	3.4
<u>LABORER</u>		
Animal caretaker, non-farm	1	0.5
Warehouse worker	1	0.5
Miscellaneous laborer	4	2.0
Subtotal	6	3.0
TOTAL	205	100.0

^a Refers to occupation held at time of survey

Table 2.5. EMPLOYED SINGLE MOTHERS: TYPES OF OCCUPATIONS^a BY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT AND EMPLOYMENT STATUS

	ALL	EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT (Ages 25+ Only)			EMPLOYMENT STATUS	
	(N=205) Percent	Less than High School (N=18) Percent	High School Graduate (N=96) Percent	College+ (N=75) Percent	Part-time (N=48) Percent	Full-time ^b (N=156) Percent
Clerical	42.0	11.1	43.8	49.3	22.9	48.1
Service	21.0	33.5	22.9	9.3	41.7	14.1
Professional, Manager	15.1	11.1	7.3	28.0	12.5	16.0
Operatives ^c	9.3	38.9	10.4	1.3	6.3	10.3
Sales	6.3	0.0	8.5	6.7	10.4	5.1
Crafts	3.4	0.0	4.2	4.0	0.0	4.5
Laborer	2.9	5.6	3.1	1.3	6.3	1.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

^a Refers to occupation held at time of survey

^b Full-time is defined as 35 or more hours a week

^c Includes transport operatives

Note: Significance test for education (25+ only): operative, service, clerical: chi square = 28.77; df = 4, p < .0001
Significance test for employment status (clerical vs. service): corrected chi square = 16.80; df = 1; p < .0001

Table 2.6. TYPES OF OCCUPATIONS AMONG SINGLE MOTHERS AND AMONG FEMALES
IN RAMSEY COUNTY

	Ramsey County Females	Single Mothers
	1980 ^a	1984 ^b
	(N=106,577)	(N=205)
	Percent	Percent
Clerical	39	42
Service	18	21
Professional/Technical	26	15
Operatives	7	9
Sales	7	6
Crafts	2	3
Laborer	2	3
Total	100	100

^a Employed females age 16 and older (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1983B)

^b Single mothers employed when surveyed

Note: Totals do not add up to 100 due to rounding.

SINGLE MOTHERS: TYPES OF OCCUPATIONS BY AVERAGE
Table 2.7. OCCUPATIONAL STATUS RANKINGS^a

	OCCUPATIONAL STATUS RANKINGS	
	(Mean)	(Number)
Professional/Technical	52.9	31
Clerical	40.6	86
Crafts	39.6	7
Sales	34.6	13
Operatives	28.9	19
Service	27.2	42
Labor	21.2	6
Total	37.6	204

^a Measured by occupational prestige rankings of respondent's job at time of survey. Rankings, based on occupation prestige scores developed by Paul Siegel, were drawn from Hauser and Featherman (1977). Higher scores indicate higher status.

rankings for each occupational category. The status rankings ranged from 14.0 to 61.0.

Table 2.8 shows the average occupational status rankings for currently employed single mothers by various demographic characteristics, education, and employment status. Racial minorities, mothers of preschool children, those with less than a high school education (ages 25 and older only), and those employed part-time were more likely than other single mothers to be in lower status occupations. Occupational status was not significantly related to age, marital status, nor vocational training.

Occupational Advancement

Occupational mobility or advancement was measured by examining the changes in occupational status rankings from the respondent's last job to her current job. The analysis includes only employed single mothers ages 25 and older because they were more likely to have settled into steady employment or a career than younger respondents.

A comparison of the status rankings found that single mothers were as likely to have experienced a decline in status as to have experienced occupational advancement. Thirteen percent moved up ten or more status rank points, 15 percent moved down 10 or more status rank points, and 72 percent changed less than 10 points in either direction. The pattern of change between current and last previous occupational status ranking did not significantly vary by demographic characteristics, education or employment status.

Fringe Benefits

More than two-thirds (68 percent) of all employed single mothers and 80 percent of those employed full-time held jobs that provided fringe benefits (e.g., medical and vacation benefits). **Table 2.9** shows the type of occupation and employment status by the presence or absence of fringe benefits. Among the most common types of occupations, service positions were much less likely to provide fringe benefits than either clerical or professional positions. Less than a third of those employed part-time compared with 80 percent of those employed full-time had jobs that provided fringe benefits. Six percent of those employed part-time reported having full-time fringe benefits.

Respondents were also asked if they had other fringe benefits besides medical and vacation benefits. Twenty-nine percent reported having a flexible

EMPLOYED SINGLE MOTHERS: OCCUPATIONAL STATUS RANKINGS^a BY
Table 2.8. DEMOGRAPHIC, EDUCATIONAL, AND EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS

	NUMBER	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION
<u>ALL</u>	(205)	37.6	10.7
<u>AGE</u>			
16-24	(16)	31.8	9.4
25-34	(74)	37.2	11.0
35+	(115)	38.6	10.4
<u>RACE</u>			
White	(170)	<u>38.6</u>	10.5
Other	(35)	<u>32.5</u>	10.0
<u>MARITAL STATUS</u>			
Divorced	(120)	38.9	10.9
Separated	(25)	36.2	9.8
Widowed	(21)	38.0	9.7
Never Married	(39)	34.0	10.4
<u>AGE OF YOUNGEST</u>			
0-5	(52)	<u>34.0</u>	10.5
6+	(153)	<u>38.8</u>	10.5
<u>EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT</u> (Ages 25+ Only)			
Less than High School	(18)	<u>30.5</u>	9.7
High School Graduate	(96)	<u>35.4</u>	10.0
College+	(75)	<u>43.2</u>	9.4
<u>COMPLETION OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING</u> (Ages 25+ Only)			
Yes	(56)	40.5	9.5
No	(132)	37.1	11.0
<u>EMPLOYMENT STATUS</u>			
Part-time (1-34 hrs.)	(48)	<u>33.9</u>	11.0
Full-time (35+ hrs.)	(156)	<u>38.8</u>	10.3

^a Measured by occupational prestige ranking of respondent's job at time of survey. Rankings, based on occupation prestige scores developed by Paul Siegel, were drawn from Hauser and Featherman (1977). Higher scores indicate higher status.

Note: Underlined mean scores signify significant differences at the .01 level.

Significance test for age: $F = 2.95$; $df = 2, 202$; NS

Significance test for race: $F = 9.99$; $df = 1, 203$; $p < .01$

Significance test for marital status: $F = 2.25$; $df = 3, 201$; NS

Significance test for age of youngest: $F = 8.06$; $df = 1, 203$; $p < .01$

Significance test for education: $F = 19.50$; $df = 2, 186$; $p < .001$

Significance test for votech training: $F = 3.88$; $df = 1, 186$; NS

Significance test for employment status: $F = 8.03$; $df = 1, 202$; $p < .01$

EMPLOYED SINGLE MOTHERS:
Table 2.9. FRINGE BENEFITS BY TYPE OF OCCUPATION AND EMPLOYMENT STATUS

	FRINGE BENEFITS		
	YES	NO	TOTAL
	Percent	Percent	Percent
<u>TYPE OF OCCUPATION (Full-time and Part-time)</u>			
Professional, Manager	87.1	12.9	100.0
Clerical	83.7	16.3	100.0
Crafts	57.1	42.9	100.0
Sales	46.2	53.8	100.0
Operatives	68.4	31.6	100.0
Service	30.2	69.8	100.0
Laborer	66.7	33.3	100.0
<u>TYPE OF OCCUPATION (Full-time Only)</u>			
Professional, Manager	92.0	8.0	100.0
Clerical	92.0	8.0	100.0
Crafts	57.1	42.9	100.0
Sales	50.0	50.0	100.0
Operatives	81.3	18.8	100.0
Service	36.4	63.6	100.0
Laborer	100.0	0.0	100.0
<u>EMPLOYMENT STATUS</u>			
Part-time (1-34 hours)	31.3	68.8	100.0
Full-time (35+ hours)	79.5	20.5	100.0

Significance test for type of occupation (professional & manager, clerical, service): chi square = 44.41; df = 2; $p < .0001$

Significance test for type of occupation (professional & manager, clerical, service) (full-time only): chi square = 37.76; df = 2; $p < .0001$

Significance test for employment status: corrected chi square = 36.15; df = 1; $p < .0001$

work schedule, 21 percent had paid personal days for family responsibilities, and 4 percent reported having child care at the place they worked.

JOB NEEDS AND PREFERENCES OF EMPLOYED SINGLE MOTHERS

This section describes work schedule satisfaction, satisfaction with the number of hours worked, adequacy of job features, preferred job features, and work decisions related to family life among employed single mothers. These job needs and preferences are examined for demographic, employment status, occupational type and occupational status differences.

Satisfaction with Work Schedule and Number of Hours

Four-fifths of employed single mothers worked during the day. Those who worked part-time rather than full-time were more likely to work hours other than daytime hours (i.e., hours between 7:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.), 40 percent versus 14 percent.² Most (80 percent) employed single mothers, regardless of when they worked, were satisfied with their present work schedules.

Sixty-eight percent of employed single mothers were satisfied with the number of hours they worked, 17 percent wanted more hours, and 15 percent wanted fewer hours. Those satisfied with the number of hours they worked, those wanting more hours, and those wanting fewer hours varied significantly only by employment status. Those employed full-time were more likely than those employed part-time to be satisfied with the number of hours they worked (74 percent to 48 percent).³ Those employed part-time were about as likely to want more hours (46 percent) as they were to be satisfied with their present number of hours employed (48 percent).

Adequacy of Job Features

Table 2.10 lists the job features rated by employed single mothers for their adequacy and the percentages who rated each feature as "less than adequate." Over half rated "opportunities for advancement" as inadequate; more than two-fifths rated "pay" as inadequate, and almost a third rated "fringe benefits" as inadequate. "Friendship" at work was found to be adequate or

² Significance test for when worked (part-time vs. full-time): corrected chi square = 12.62; df = 1; p < .001.

³ Significance test for employment status (part-time vs. full-time): chi square = 39.11; df = 2; p < .0001.

EMPLOYED SINGLE MOTHERS:
Table 2.10. ADEQUACY RATINGS OF CURRENT JOB FEATURES

JOB FEATURES	Percentage reporting "less than adequate" ^a	
	Percent	Number/Total responses ^b
Opportunities for advancement	55.1	103/187
Pay	41.4	84/204
Fringe benefits	32.8	58/177
Challenge of work	29.1	59/203
Sense of accomplishment	27.1	55/203
Job security	26.8	53/198
The way treated by employer	16.2	32/198
Friendship	6.1	12/197

^a Includes those answering "somewhat less than adequate" or "much less than adequate."

^b Variations in total responses are due to missing data and responses of "does not apply" (e.g., fringe benefits for self-employed individuals) that were recorded as missing.

better most frequently. The proportion of employed single mothers rating each feature as inadequate did not vary by any demographic or occupational characteristics, except those employed part-time rather than full-time were more likely to rate "job security" as inadequate.

Preferred Job Features

Respondents were read the list of job features presented in **Table 2.11** and asked which of the items they would want most as part of their present or future jobs. Those employed part-time most often wanted "part-time work with full-time fringe benefits." Those employed full-time were more evenly divided among five job features: "part-time work with full-time fringe benefits," "job satisfaction and enrichment," "paid personal days for family responsibilities," "flexible work schedule," and "child care at work." "Job sharing" and "work during evening hours" were the least preferred job features among employed single mothers.

Work Decisions Related to Family Life

Employed respondents were asked if they made any decisions in the following areas in the past year because of family responsibilities: the number of hours to work, the time of day to work, the distance to commute, and whether to change work responsibilities (see **Table 2.12**).

Forty percent of the employed single mothers made decisions about the number of hours to work because of family needs. Twenty-three percent decided to work more hours, and 14 percent decided to work fewer hours.

About a third (34 percent) of the employed single mothers made decisions about the time of day to work because of family needs. Eleven percent decided to work days only, 12 percent decided to arrange their work schedule around their child's schedule, for example, to be home when their children got home from school or to be home to see their children off to school in the morning. Six percent decided to work night hours because, for example, children were asleep, babysitters were available, or more time could be spent with the children during the day. Those working part-time rather than full-time were

Table 2.11. EMPLOYED SINGLE MOTHERS: PREFERRED JOB FEATURES BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS

	PERCENT RATING ITEM AS MOST PREFERRED JOB FEATURE	
	Part-time (N=48)	Full-time (N=155)
Part-time work with full-time fringe benefits	54.2	18.7
Job satisfaction and enrichment	18.8	18.7
Paid personal days for family responsibilities	8.3	17.4
Child care at place of work	8.3	14.8
Flexible work schedule	4.2	16.1
Working at home	2.1	8.4
Support group at work to discuss work and family conflicts	2.1	3.2
No preference	2.1	0.6
Family education program at work for all employees	0.0	1.3
Work during evening hours	0.0	0.6
Single job shared with someone else	0.0	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0

EMPLOYED SINGLE MOTHERS: WORK DECISIONS MADE IN PAST
Table 2.12. YEAR BECAUSE OF FAMILY RESPONSIBILITY

<u>TYPE OF DECISIONS</u>		
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Number</u>
<u>NUMBER OF HOURS TO WORK</u>		
No decision	59.8	122
Work more hours	22.5	46
Work fewer hours	14.2	29
Refuse overtime	2.5	5
Other	<u>1.0</u>	<u>2</u>
Total	100.0	204
<u>TIME OF DAY TO WORK</u>		
No decision	66.2	135
Work days only	11.3	23
Work around child's schedule	12.3	25
Work night only	5.9	12
Other	<u>3.9</u>	<u>8</u>
Total	100.0	204
<u>COMMUTING</u>		
No decision	75.0	153
Work close to home	11.3	23
Move close to work	3.4	7
Work further away	2.9	6
Work at home	2.5	5
Stay in metro area	2.5	5
Other	<u>2.5</u>	<u>5</u>
Total	100.0	204
<u>CHANGING WORK RESPONSIBILITIES</u>		
No decision	76.0	155
Increase responsibility	12.7	26
Reduce responsibility	<u>11.3</u>	<u>23</u>
Total	100.0	204

more likely to make decisions about when to work because of family needs (56 percent vs. 27 percent).⁴

A quarter of the employed single mothers made decisions about commuting. Eleven percent decided "to work closer to home," and three percent decided "to move closer to work." Those decisions were based on considerations about the costs or lack of transportation, the cost of "extra daycare," and longer commuting time adding to time away from the family. Three percent decided to work at home based on considerations about commuting. At the time of the survey, about 7 percent (N=15) of the employed single mothers worked at home. For those working outside the home, nearly three quarters worked no more than 20 minutes away from home.

Finally, about a quarter (24 percent) of the employed single mothers decided to change responsibilities at work because of responsibilities at home. Thirteen percent (N=26) decided to take on more responsibilities at work, and 11 percent (N=23) decided to reduce responsibilities at work in order to have "more time and energy" for their families and less "pressure" and "frustration." The types of responsibilities reduced included business travel, committee work, and promotions. Those who decided to reduce their responsibilities at work held higher-status jobs than those who decided to increase responsibilities at work.⁵ The numbers of respondents who made decisions are small, however, and the differences among respondents should be interpreted cautiously.

FURTHER CHARACTERISTICS OF EMPLOYED SINGLE MOTHERS: PROSPECTS FOR ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE

This section first compares the characteristics of currently employed Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) recipients with the characteristics of other employed single mothers. The section then compares, among the full-time employed who were not receiving AFDC when surveyed, the characteristics of those having annual incomes of less than \$14,000 with those having annual incomes of \$14,000 or higher. Characteristics compared across the groups

⁴ Significance test for time of day to work (part-time vs. full-time): corrected chi square = 12.82; df = 1; p < .001.

⁵ Significance test for job status (reduce responsibilities: mean = 42.7; S.D. = 8.7 vs. increase responsibilities: mean = 34.2; S.D. = 10.4): F = 9.42; df = 1, 47; p < .01.

include demographic factors; education and vocational training; work history; occupational characteristics; and employment needs, including the problems the employed AFDC recipients and the lower-income group face finding better jobs and their likely obstacles to further education or training.

AFDC Versus No AFDC

Eighteen percent (N=36) of the employed single mothers were also receiving AFDC when surveyed. Sixty-four percent of that group worked part-time, and 36 percent worked full-time. Among employed single mothers, those receiving AFDC had significantly different demographic characteristics, work histories, and occupational characteristics than those not receiving AFDC. Within the group who were not receiving AFDC when surveyed, one-third (N=62) had received AFDC at some time in the past.

Among employed single mothers, those receiving AFDC were more likely to be younger than age 25, racial minorities, never married, and to have a preschool child at home than those not receiving AFDC (see **Table 2.13**). Receiving AFDC among employed mothers was not significantly related to the number of dependent children at home. The vast majority of both the AFDC group (89 percent) and the non-AFDC group (91 percent), moreover, completed high school. Those in the AFDC group appeared less likely to go on to attend some college, however (18 percent vs. 44 percent).⁶ Thirteen of the single mothers in the AFDC group completed vocational training: 8 received clerical training; 2 were trained as operatives; 2 were trained as nursing assistants; and 1 received computer analyst training.

Employed AFDC recipients tended to change jobs more frequently in the past five years than other employed single mothers (see **Table 2.14**). Employed AFDC recipients also had significantly less full-time work experience than those employed and not receiving AFDC. Half of the employed AFDC recipients had no full-time work experience. In contrast, more than two-thirds of the non-AFDC group had worked full-time during all of the past five years (see **Table 2.14**).

Compared with those not receiving AFDC (including former AFDC recipients), employed AFDC recipients were significantly more likely to be in lower-status

⁶ Significance test for education (college vs. no college): corrected chi square = 5.63; df = 1; NS.

EMPLOYED SINGLE MOTHERS: AFDC STATUS^a
Table 2.13. BY DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

	AFDC (N=36) Percent	NO AFDC (N=168) Percent
ALL	17.6	82.4
<u>AGE</u>		
16-24	<u>22.2</u>	<u>4.8</u>
25-34	<u>41.7</u>	<u>35.1</u>
35+	<u>36.1</u>	<u>60.1</u>
Total	100.0	100.0
<u>RACE</u>		
White	<u>63.9</u>	<u>86.9</u>
Other racial groups	<u>36.1</u>	<u>13.1</u>
Total	100.0	100.0
<u>MARITAL STATUS</u>		
Divorced	<u>47.2</u>	<u>60.7</u>
Never Married	<u>41.7</u>	<u>13.1</u>
Separated	<u>8.3</u>	<u>11.9</u>
Widowed	<u>2.8</u>	<u>14.3</u>
Total	100.0	100.0
<u>AGE OF YOUNGEST CHILD</u>		
Ages 0-5	<u>44.4</u>	<u>21.4</u>
Ages 6-17	<u>55.6</u>	<u>78.6</u>
Total	100.0	100.0

^a AFDC status refers to receiving AFDC when surveyed.

Note: Significance test for age: chi square = 14.93; df = 2; p < .001

Significance test for race: corrected chi square = 9.49; df = 1; p < .01

Significance test for marital status: chi square = 15.50; df = 3; p < .01

Significance test for age of youngest child: corrected chi square = 7.10; df = 1; p < .01

Note: Underlined percentages signify significant differences at the .01 level.

EMPLOYED SINGLE MOTHERS: WORK HISTORY
Table 2.14. AND TYPES OF OCCUPATIONS BY AFDC STATUS

NUMBER OF JOBS IN PAST FIVE YEARS ^b	AFDC STATUS ^a	
	YES	NO
	(N=36) Percent	(N=168) Percent
1	27.8	52.4
2	25.0	28.0
3	33.3	13.7
4+	13.9	6.0
Total	100.0	100.0

YEARS OF FULL-TIME WORK EXPERIENCE PAST FIVE YEARS	(N=36) Percent	(N=168) Percent
	Percent	Percent
0	50.0	8.3
1	19.4	4.8
2	13.9	4.8
3	2.8	7.1
4	2.8	6.5
5	11.1	68.5
Total	100.0	100.0

TYPE OF OCCUPATION ^c	(N=37) Percent	(N=168) Percent
	Percent	Percent
Clerical	27.0	45.2
Service	48.6	14.9
Professional, Manager	0.0	18.5
Operatives ^d	10.8	8.9
Sales	8.1	6.0
Crafts	0.0	4.2
Laborer	5.3	2.4
Total	100.0	100.0

^a Refers to receiving AFDC when surveyed

^b Includes full-time, part-time, and temporary employment

^c Refers to occupation held at time of survey

^d Includes transport operatives

Note: Significance test for number of jobs, difference between means (AFDC, yes: mean = 2.6; S.D. = 1.9 vs. no: mean = 1.8; S.D. = 1.1): $F = 13.60$; $df = 1, 202$; $p < .001$

Significance test for years of full-time work experience, difference between means (AFDC, yes: mean = 1.2; S.D. = 1.7 vs. no: mean = 4.0; S.D. = 1.7): $F = 86.10$; $df = 1, 202$; $p < .0001$

Significance test for AFDC status (clerical vs. service): corrected chi square = 13.69, $df = 1$, $p < .001$

occupations⁷ and significantly less likely to have jobs that provided fringe benefits (17 percent versus 79 percent).⁸ They also appeared more likely than other employed single mothers to have experienced a decline in occupational status from their last jobs to their current jobs (29 percent versus 14 percent). Employed AFDC recipients, finally, were more likely to be service workers, while those not receiving AFDC were more likely to hold clerical or professional/technical positions (see **Table 2.14**).

Seventy-one percent of the employed AFDC recipients in this survey reported having problems that affected their ability to find a better job. The most frequently cited problems (see **Table 2.15**) were "lacking enough education or training" (64 percent) and "lacking experience" (60 percent). "The lack of affordable day care" (24 percent) or not having "reliable day care" (12 percent) were other obstacles to finding a better job among some employed AFDC recipients.

Eighty-one percent (N=29) of the employed single mothers receiving AFDC when surveyed expressed a desire for further general education or job training in the next year. They were primarily interested in preparing for different jobs. When asked if any problems were likely to keep them from obtaining the education or training that they wanted, about a quarter (24 percent) of those wanting further education or training in the next year cited that nothing was likely to keep them from obtaining what they wanted. **Table 2.16** lists the problems likely to hinder the others. "Cost" (64 percent), "transportation problems" (36 percent), and "lacking reliable and affordable day care" (27 percent) were the most likely obstacles to further general education or job training in the next year reported by employed AFDC recipients.

Lower Income (\$14,000 or Less) vs. Higher Income (\$14,000 or More)

Among those working full-time and not receiving AFDC (N=143), 36 percent had annual incomes of less than \$14,000 and 64 percent had annual incomes of \$14,000 or higher. The chief distinction between these two income groups in terms of their demographic, educational and work history characteristics was

⁷ The average occupational status rankings for AFDC and non-AFDC were 28.6 (S.D. = 7.8) and 39.5 (S.D. = 10.2) respectively. Significance test for difference between means: $F = 37.25$; $df = 1, 203$; $p < .0001$.

⁸ Significance test for fringe benefits (AFDC, yes vs. no): corrected chi square = 50.50; $df = 1$; $p < .0001$.

EMPLOYED SINGLE MOTHERS RECEIVING AFDC:

Table 2.15. OBSTACLES TO FINDING A BETTER JOB (MULTIPLE RESPONSES)^a

	PERCENT OF EMPLOYED AFDC RECIPIENTS REPORTING ^b (N=25)
Not enough education or training	64.0
Not enough job experience	60.0
Can't find affordable daycare	24.0
Don't want to leave children	16.0
Don't have reliable daycare	12.0
Other family responsibilities	4.0
Health problems	0.0
Lack money for education	0.0
No time to look	0.0

^a Includes only those who cited an obstacle to finding a better job

^b Receiving AFDC when surveyed

Note: Respondents read from a list of responses and were asked, "In your case, do any of the problems on that list directly affect your ability to find a better job?"

EMPLOYED SINGLE MOTHERS RECEIVING AFDC: OBSTACLES TO EDUCATION
Table 2.16. OR TRAINING IN NEXT YEAR (MULTIPLE RESPONSES INCLUDED)^a

OBSTACLES	PERCENT OF EMPLOYED AFDC RECIPIENTS REPORTING ^b (N=22)
Cost	63.6
Transportation problems	36.4
No reliable or affordable daycare	27.3
Don't want to leave children	13.6
Not enough information	13.6
No time	9.1
Other family problems	9.1
Child not ready for day care yet	9.1
Assistance not available	4.5
Problems getting into programs	4.5

^a Includes responses for only those reporting problems

^b Receiving AFDC when surveyed

Note: Respondents read from a list of possible reasons and were asked,
"Are any problems likely to keep you from obtaining further general
education or job-specific training?"

the lower-income group's relative lack of full-time employment experience. The two groups did not significantly differ demographically or educationally. While the majority of both groups had worked full-time during all of the past 5 years, about one in five of the lower income group had 2 years or fewer of full-time work experience, including 8 percent who had started working full-time less than a year before being surveyed (see **Table 2.17**). Four-fifths of both income groups, finally, had just one or two jobs in the past five years (see **Table 2.17**).

Respondents in both income groups were most often clerical workers. The lower-income group, however, was more likely than the higher-income group to work in service occupations (see **Table 2.17**). Those with incomes of less than \$14,000 rather than \$14,000 or more were significantly more likely to be in lower-status occupations.⁹ The lower-income group was also significantly less likely to have fringe benefits at work (73 percent vs. 91 percent).¹⁰ The two income groups did not significantly differ by occupational mobility.

Sixty percent (N=31) of the lower-income group reported having problems that affected their ability to find a better job. "Lacking enough education or training" (61 percent), "lacking job experience" (39 percent), "not wanting to leave their children" (16 percent), and "lacking money for education" (3 percent) were the obstacles cited.¹¹

Fifty-six percent (N=29) of the lower-income group expressed a desire for further general education or job training in the next year. They were primarily interested in career advancement. More than three quarters (79 percent, N=23) of those wanting further education or training cited problems that would likely keep them from obtaining what they wanted. "Cost" (39 percent), "no time" (30 percent), "lacking information about programs" (26 percent), "problems gaining admission to programs" (17 percent) and "lack of reliable or affordable child care" (13 percent) were the most likely obstacles

⁹ Average of occupational status rankings for lower-income group was 36.4 (S.D. = 9.2) and for higher-income group was 41.8 (S.D. = 9.9). Significance test for difference between means (< \$14,000 vs. \$14,000+): $F = 10.04$; $df = 1, 141$; $p < .01$.

¹⁰ Significance test for income (< \$14,000 vs. \$14,000+): corrected chi square = 7.02; $df = 1$; $p < .01$.

¹¹ Includes multiple responses (N=31).

EMPLOYED SINGLE MOTHERS: WORK HISTORY AND TYPES
Table 2.17. OF OCCUPATIONS BY INCOME

	INCOME ^a	
	LESS THAN \$14,000	\$14,000+
	(N=52)	(N=91)
	Percent	Percent
<u>NUMBER OF JOBS^b</u> <u>IN PAST FIVE YEARS</u>		
1	44.2	59.3
2	34.6	23.1
3	13.5	13.2
4+	7.7	4.4
Total	100.0	100.0
<u>YEARS OF FULL-TIME</u> <u>WORK EXPERIENCE</u> <u>PAST FIVE YEARS</u>		
0	7.7	0.0
1	3.8	2.2
2	7.7	0.0
3	9.6	6.6
4	13.5	4.4
5	57.7	86.8
Total	100.0	100.0
<u>TYPE OF OCCUPATION^c</u>		
Clerical	48.1	50.5
Service	25.0	3.3
Professional, Manager	9.6	22.0
Operatives ^d	11.5	8.8
Sales	1.9	6.6
Crafts	1.9	6.6
Laborer	1.9	2.2
Total	100.0	100.0

^a Includes only those employed full-time and not receiving AFDC when surveyed

^b Includes full-time, part-time and temporary employment

^c Refers to occupation held at time of survey

^d Includes transport operatives

Note: Significance test for number of jobs, difference between means (income < \$14,000: mean = 1.9; S.D. = 1.2 vs. \$14,000+: mean = 1.6; S.D. = .91): F = 2.93; df = 1, 141; NS

Significance test for years of full-time work experience, difference between means (< \$14,000: mean = 3.9; S.D. = 1.6 vs. \$14,000+: mean = 4.7; S.D. = .77): F = 17.36; df = 1, 141; p < .001

Significance test for income (clerical vs. service): corrected chi square = 9.46; df = 1; p < .001

to further general education or job training for those 23 single mothers in the lower-income group.

UNEMPLOYMENT

CURRENT UNEMPLOYMENT

At the time of this study, 14.2 percent (N=34) of the single mothers in the labor force were unemployed. That is, they were not working, but they were available for work and had made an effort to seek it during the four weeks before being interviewed. Those laid off from a job waiting to be recalled and those waiting to report to a job within 30 days were also considered unemployed.¹² The average monthly unemployment rate in Ramsey County at the time of the survey (March-August, 1984) was 4.9 (Minnesota Department of Economic Security, 1984). As shown in Chapter 1, current unemployment was not associated with any demographic characteristics (see **Table 1.18**) or with educational attainment levels (see **Table 1.19**).

The median length of time that currently unemployed single mothers had been looking for work was 20 weeks. The range was from 2 weeks to 3 years.

The vast majority of those looking for work, 91 percent (N=29), said that finding a job was "very important." Sixty-six percent were looking for full-time employment; 19 percent were seeking part-time employment and 16 percent were seeking either full or part-time jobs. Twenty-nine percent were looking for service positions, 26 percent were looking for professional or managerial positions, 19 percent were looking for clerical positions, and 6 percent were looking for craft or operative positions. The remaining 19 percent were looking for "anything" or could not specify the type of position.

When asked to describe what they had done to find work during the past 4 weeks, unemployed single mothers most often cited "reading the want ads" and "applying for jobs in person." Their responses, grouped in categories, are listed in **Table 2.18**.

Finally, unemployed respondents were asked, "What do you think is the main reason that you haven't found employment yet?" "Lack of experience" and "lack of job openings" were the most frequent responses (see **Table 2.19**).

¹² This definition of unemployment is the definition used by the U.S. Department of Labor.

UNEMPLOYED SINGLE MOTHERS: WHAT DID TO FIND EMPLOYMENT
 Table 2.18. DURING PAST 4 WEEKS^a (MULTIPLE RESPONSES INCLUDED) (N=32)

	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Number</u>
Read want ads, sent resume	56.2	18
Applied in person	53.1	17
Used WIN program	18.8	6
Contacted State Job Service	12.5	4
Sought counseling	9.4	3
Asked friends	6.2	2
Took civil service exam	6.2	2
Visited unemployment office	6.2	2
Used "Putting it All Together"	3.1	1
Received training certificate	3.1	1
Held informational interview	3.1	1

^a Refers to the 4 weeks before being surveyed

UNEMPLOYED SINGLE MOTHERS: MAIN REASON HAVE NOT FOUND
Table 2.19. EMPLOYMENT YET (N=33)

	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Number</u>
No job openings	24.2	8
Not enough experience	24.2	8
Not enough job skills	12.1	4
Can't find job that will support family	9.1	3
Physical health problems	6.1	2
Have not looked enough	6.1	2
Job interviews do not go well	6.1	2
Don't know how to look	3.0	1
Scheduling difficulties	3.0	1
Temporarily laid off	3.0	1
Waiting to start new job within 30 days	<u>3.0</u>	<u>1</u>
Total	100.0	33

UNEMPLOYMENT IN PAST YEAR

In addition to being asked about unemployment at the time of the survey, respondents were asked if they had been unemployed (as defined above) at any time during the year before the survey. Twenty-six percent of the mothers in the labor force when surveyed (N=62) had been unemployed during the past year, twenty-four percent had been unemployed one to nine weeks, 21 percent for 10 to 25 weeks, and 55 percent for 26 or more weeks, including 31 percent who had been unemployed the entire past year.

This section compares the characteristics of those single mothers in the labor force who had been unemployed at least one week during the past year with those single mothers in the labor force who had not been unemployed during the past year. Characteristics compared across the groups include demographic factors, education, work history, and employment needs.

Unemployed vs. Employed During the Past Year

Table 2.20 shows that among single mothers currently in the labor force, those experiencing unemployment during the past year were more likely to be younger than age 25, racial minorities, and never married and were more likely to have preschool children than those who did not experience unemployment in the past year. Among those currently employed, those receiving AFDC were more likely than those not receiving AFDC to have been unemployed in the past year (61 to 7 percent).¹³ Being unemployed in the past year was not associated with educational attainment nor completion of vocational training.

Single mothers working as operatives or in service positions were more likely to have been unemployed in the past year than those working in professional or clerical positions. Those in the unemployed group changed jobs more frequently in the past five years than those in the employed group. The unemployed group also worked fewer years full-time on the average in the past five years than the employed group (1.8 to 3.8 years), including about a third (29 percent) of the unemployed group with no full-time work experience in the past five years.

Respondents were given a list of responses and asked, "In your case, do any of the problems on that list directly affect your ability to hold a job?"

¹³ Significance test for AFDC status (yes vs. no): corrected chi square = 58.35; df = 1; p < .0001.

SINGLE MOTHERS IN THE LABOR FORCE: EMPLOYED VS. UNEMPLOYED IN
Table 2.20. PAST YEAR BY DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

	EMPLOYED ALL PAST YEAR	UNEMPLOYED AT LEAST ONE WEEK PAST YEAR
	(N=176)	(N=62)
	Percent	Percent
<u>AGE</u>		
16-24	<u>5.1</u>	<u>22.6</u>
25-34	<u>35.8</u>	<u>38.7</u>
35+	<u>59.1</u>	<u>38.7</u>
Total	100.0	100.0
<u>RACE</u>		
White	<u>84.7</u>	<u>67.7</u>
Other racial groups	<u>15.3</u>	<u>32.3</u>
Total	100.0	100.0
<u>MARITAL STATUS</u>		
Divorced	<u>59.7</u>	<u>50.0</u>
Never Married	<u>15.9</u>	<u>37.1</u>
Separated	<u>13.1</u>	<u>9.7</u>
Widowed	<u>11.4</u>	<u>3.2</u>
Total	100.0	100.0
<u>AGE OF YOUNGEST CHILD</u>		
Ages 0-5	<u>21.6</u>	<u>43.5</u>
Ages 6-17	<u>78.4</u>	<u>56.5</u>
Total	100.0	100.0

Note: Underlined percentages signify differences between employed and unemployed groups at the .01 level.

Significance test for age: chi square = 18.12; df = 2; p < .001

Significance test for race: corrected chi square = 7.25; df = 1; p < .01

Significance test for marital status: chi square = 14.07; df = 3; p < .01

Significance test for youngest child: corrected chi square = 10.05; df = 1; p < .01

Those in the unemployed group most frequently cited the following problems holding a job: "not having enough job experience" (24 percent), "not having enough education" (23 percent), "lacking affordable day care" (18 percent), and "lacking reliable daycare" (14 percent). Those in the unemployed group were, finally, more likely than those in the employed group to want job or career advice in the year following this study (68 to 45 percent).

SINGLE MOTHERS OUT OF THE LABOR FORCE

INTRODUCTION

Thirty-eight percent (N=146) of the single mothers in this survey were not participating in the labor force. That is, they were neither employed when surveyed nor actively seeking employment during the four weeks before being surveyed. **Table 1.18** in Chapter 1 shows, to repeat, that those younger than age 35 (especially those younger than age 25), racial minorities, never married and separated respondents, and those with preschool children were more likely than other single mothers to be out of the labor force. Those with less than a high school education were also more likely than high school graduates to be out of the labor force (see **Table 1.19**).

Of the 161 single mothers who had at least one preschool child, 60 percent were currently out of the labor force. Ninety-eight percent (N=94) of these mothers of preschoolers who were out of the labor force were receiving AFDC when surveyed. Of the 223 single mothers whose dependent children were all of school age (i.e., ages 6-17), 22 percent were out of the labor force. Eighty-eight percent (N=44) of these mothers who were out of the labor force were receiving AFDC. This section examines the characteristics and employment needs of single mothers out of the labor force and receiving AFDC, first those with at least one preschool child at home and then those whose youngest dependent child is age 6 or older. For brevity, the two groups will be referred to as AFDC mothers with preschoolers and AFDC mothers with school age children only. Their counterparts who were in the labor force and not receiving AFDC will be referred to as non-AFDC mothers.

OUT OF THE LABOR FORCE AND RECEIVING AFDC: SINGLE MOTHERS WITH AT LEAST ONE PRESCHOOLER AT HOME (N=94)

Demographic and Educational Characteristics

AFDC mothers with preschoolers tended to be younger than age 35 (89 percent) and never married (57 percent) rather than divorced (20 percent), separated (17 percent), or widowed (5 percent). The majority of these single mothers (57 percent) were White. Forty-two percent had 1 child at home, 27 percent had 2 children, and 32 percent had 3 or more children. Eighty-eight percent of those with two or more children were receiving AFDC when they had their last child. Sixty-one percent became parents as teenagers (limited to those currently ages 16-34). They had been single parents (the most recent time if more than once) an average of 4.2 years.

Non-AFDC mothers with preschoolers (N=38) also tended to be younger than age 35 (87 percent), but were more likely to be divorced (47 percent) than never married (26 percent), separated (21 percent) or widowed (5 percent). The majority of these single mothers were also White, but the proportion who were racial minorities was much lower than among those who were AFDC mothers (11 percent vs. 43 percent). They also tended to have smaller families, 66 percent having 1 child at home, 29 percent having 2 children, and 5 percent having 3 or more children. Also, in contrast, a much lower percentage of non-AFDC mothers with preschoolers than AFDC mothers with preschoolers became parents as teenagers (22 percent versus 61 percent).

For those age 25 and older, 39 percent of the AFDC mothers with preschoolers did not complete high school. Sixty-one percent were high school graduates, including 12 percent who attended some college. Twenty percent had received vocational/technical training. In contrast, all of the non-AFDC single mothers with preschoolers had completed high school, including 45 percent who had attended some college.

Work Histories and Occupational Characteristics

AFDC mothers with preschoolers had not been employed for an average of 3.0 years, ranging from one week to 15 years. Twenty percent had been out of the labor force for less than a year, 24 percent for 1 year to less than 2 years, 44 percent for 2-5 years, and 12 percent had been out of the labor force for more than 5 years. Single mothers in this group averaged a year (1.0) of full-time work experience in the past five years. The majority (84 percent) had at least one part-time job in the past five years.

The kinds of jobs that single mothers in this group last held tended to be of significantly lower status than the jobs held by their non-AFDC counterparts.¹⁵ Forty-two percent of the AFDC mothers with preschoolers last held service positions, such as waitress, food service worker, or nurse's aide; 26 percent held clerical positions, such as secretary or teacher's aide; 11 percent were operatives; 9 percent were laborers; 7 percent held sales positions; 3 percent held craft positions; 2 percent were farmers; none held professional/technical/managerial positions; and 4 percent had never been employed. In contrast, 24 percent of their non-AFDC counterparts currently held service positions; 50 percent held clerical positions; 5 percent were operatives; and 8 percent held professional/technical/managerial positions.

Job Needs and Preferences

This section discusses the reasons single mothers left their last job, the reasons they are not looking for work, and their barriers to further education or training. Respondents were provided lists of possible responses for questions covering each of the above topics. They could choose one or more responses from the list for each question; or if none of the listed response options fit their particular situation, they could give their own alternative response which was then recorded in their own words and later assigned to a set of categories that were developed. The percentages in this section do not total 100 percent because respondents could give multiple responses.

Reasons left most recent job. Table 2.21 shows that the major reasons AFDC mothers of preschoolers left their last jobs include labor market factors and family conflicts. Twenty percent of this group, for example, were "laid off," 18 percent quit to have a baby, 13 percent "moved" and 9 percent had "child care" problems.

Reasons not looking for work. More than a third (35 percent) of the AFDC mothers with preschool children were not looking for employment because they had "no interest in employment at present." Among those interested in employment (N=61), "not enough education" (41 percent), "not enough experience"

¹⁵ Significance test for difference between means (29.5 vs. 36.3):
F = 12.18; df = 1, 126; p < .001.

SINGLE MOTHERS OUT OF LABOR FORCE AND RECEIVING AFDC: REASONS LEFT MOST
Table 2.21. RECENT JOB BY AGE OF YOUNGEST CHILD^a

	YOUNGEST CHILD AGES 0-5	YOUNGEST CHILD AGES 6-17
	(N=90)	(N=42)
	Percent	Percent
Laid off	20.0	21.4
Illness, injury	5.6	19.0
To have a baby	17.8	11.9
Moved	13.3	4.8
Child care problems	8.9	11.9
Child rearing conflicts	2.2	7.1
Needed more pay	3.3	7.1
Fired	5.6	7.1
Could earn as much on AFDC	5.6	0.0
To return to school	2.2	4.8
Poor work environment	4.4	0.0
To avoid losing AFDC	3.3	0.0
Needed more challenge	2.2	0.0
Day care costs	1.1	0.0
Transportation problems	1.1	0.0
Other reasons	3.3	4.8

^a Includes only those who have held a job

(34 percent), "family responsibilities (31 percent), "transportation problems" (28 percent), "wanting to stay home until their children were older" (26 percent) and "not being able to afford day care" (23 percent) were the reasons for not looking for employment cited most frequently (see **Table 2.22**).¹⁶ The lack of education and experience, according to one respondent, meant that "the only jobs I would get would be low paying jobs and jobs I wouldn't care for like assembly or packaging jobs."

Among those interested in employment but who did not cite the lack of education or training as a reason for being out of the labor force (N=36), "wanting to stay home with their children" (39 percent), "transportation problems" (36 percent), "family responsibilities" (33 percent), and "lack of affordable day care" (25 percent) were the most frequently cited reasons for not looking for work.

Respondents were also asked to cite the one most important reason that they were not looking for work. "Wanting to stay home until their children were older" (23 percent) was the most frequently cited reason among all of the mothers in the preschool child group. Among those interested in employment, "family responsibilities," "lack of education," and "wanting to stay home until their children were older" shared equal importance (see **Table 2.22**).

Barriers to further education or job training. Eighty-three percent of the AFDC mothers with preschoolers wanted further education or training in the next year. Eighty-eight percent (N=67) of those who wanted such education/training reported having problems that would likely keep them from obtaining the education or training that they wanted. **Table 2.23** shows that "lack of affordable or reliable day care" (31 percent), "transportation problems" (30 percent), and "not wanting to leave their children" (28 percent) were the most frequently cited obstacles to further education or job training for this group.

¹⁶ That single mothers who were interested in employment also "wanted to stay home with their children" is evidence of the conflict between work and family life experienced by many single mothers. Among AFDC mothers with preschoolers who were both interested in employment and wanted to stay home with their children, three-quarters expressed a preference for working at home. The numbers are quite small, however, and should be interpreted cautiously.

Table 2.22. SINGLE MOTHERS OUT OF LABOR FORCE AND RECEIVING AFDC: REASONS NOT LOOKING FOR WORK^a BY AGE OF YOUNGEST CHILD

	AGE OF YOUNGEST CHILD		MOST IMPORTANT REASON	
	Ages 0-5	Ages 6+	Ages 0-5	Ages 6+
	(N=61)	(N=36)	(N=60)	(N=35)
	Percent Reporting Reason (Multiple Responses Included)	Percent Reporting Reason (Multiple Responses Included)	Percent	Percent
Not enough education	41.0	44.4	16.7	22.9
Health problems	8.2	44.4	5.0	22.9
Not enough work experience	34.4	41.7	6.7	8.6
Family responsibilities	31.1	16.7	16.7	8.6
Transportation problems	27.9	13.9	0.0	0.0
Want to stay home with children until they are older	26.2	19.4	16.7	11.4
Can't afford day care	23.0	5.6	8.3	0.0
Given up looking/discouraged	18.0	22.2	5.0	2.9
Welfare pays as much as work	14.8	16.7	3.3	14.3
Fear of losing AFDC	16.4	5.6	6.7	0.0
Fear of losing medical assistance	13.1	13.9	1.7	0.0
Can't find reliable day care	9.8	0.0	1.7	0.0
Going to school	8.2	8.3	6.7	5.7
Mental health problems	3.3	2.6	1.7	2.9
Other	0.0	0.0	3.3	0.0
		Total	100.0	100.0

^a Includes only those "interested in employment"

Note: Respondents read from a list of possible reasons and were asked, "Which reasons explain why you are not looking for work?"

SINGLE MOTHERS OUT OF THE LABOR FORCE AND RECEIVING AFDC:
BARRIERS TO FURTHER GENERAL EDUCATION OR JOB TRAINING BY
Table 2.23. AGE OF YOUNGEST CHILD^a (MULTIPLE RESPONSES INCLUDED)

	AGE OF YOUNGEST	
	Ages 0-5	Ages 6+
	(N=67)	(N=27)
	Percent	Percent
Transportation problems	29.9	37.0
Can't find reliable or affordable day care	31.3	0.0
Other family problems	6.0	29.6
Don't want to leave children	28.4	7.4
Lack enough information about programs	23.9	25.9
Cost of programs	22.4	14.8
Assistance not available	11.9	3.7
Child not ready for day care	10.4	0.0
Problems getting into programs	9.0	3.7
No time	4.5	0.0

^a Includes only those who wanted education or training in the next year and who reported problems that would likely hinder their obtaining it

OUT OF THE LABOR FORCE AND RECEIVING AFDC: SINGLE MOTHERS WHOSE DEPENDENT CHILDREN WERE OF SCHOOL AGE

Demographic and Educational Characteristics

AFDC mothers with school age children only were all 25 or older, including 59 percent age 35 or older. Women in this group were most often divorced (46 percent), followed by never married (30 percent), separated (18 percent), and widowed (7 percent). White single mothers represented nearly two-thirds (64 percent) of this group. The number of dependent children at home was quite evenly divided among those with one child (34 percent), two children (39 percent), and 3 or more children (27 percent). Three-quarters of those with two or more children were receiving AFDC when they had their last child. A large majority (71 percent) of these single mothers became parents as teenagers. On the average, they had been single parents 9.3 years.

Non-AFDC mothers (i.e. those in the labor force and not receiving AFDC) with school age children only were also all 25 or older, including 72 percent age 35 or older. Women in this group were also most often divorced (64 percent) but less often never married (11 percent) and separated (11 percent) and more often widowed (14 percent) than AFDC mothers. White single mothers made up an even larger proportion of this group (86 percent) than of their AFDC counterparts. The number of dependent children was similar in both groups, 49 percent of these mothers having 1 child, 38 having 2 children, and 13 percent having 3 or more children. Finally, 47 percent of these non-AFDC single mothers became parents as teenagers, apparently a lower percentage than found in the AFDC group.

Forty-six percent of the group of AFDC mothers with school age children only did not complete high school. Fifty-five percent were high school graduates, including 9 percent who attended some college. Twenty-one percent received vocational/technical training. In contrast, 12 percent of their non-AFDC counterparts did not complete high school, and 44 percent attended some college.

Work Histories and Occupational Characteristics

AFDC mothers with school age children only had not been employed for an average of 6.6 years. The range was from 16 weeks to 24 years. Eighteen percent had been out of the labor force for less than 2 years, including 9 percent for less than one year; 33 percent for 2-5 years, and 49 percent had been out of the labor force for more than 5 years. The single mothers in this

group averaged less than a year (0.8) of full-time work experience in the past five years. More than half (52 percent) had not been employed at all in the past five years.

The kinds of jobs that single mothers in this AFDC group last held tended to be of significantly lower status than the jobs held by their non-AFDC counterparts.¹⁷ For example, in the AFDC group, 48 percent last held service positions; 14 percent held clerical positions; 17 percent were operatives; 2 percent were laborers; 5 percent held sales positions; 5 percent held craft positions; 5 percent were farmers; 5 percent held professional positions; and 5 percent had never been employed. In contrast, in the non-AFDC group, 13 percent hold service positions; 43 percent hold clerical positions, and 21 percent hold professional positions.

Job Needs and Preferences

Reasons left most recent job. The major reasons cited by AFDC mothers with school age children only for leaving their last jobs include labor market factors, personal health, and family conflicts. Twenty-one percent were "laid off," 19 percent reported "personal illness or injury" as factors, 12 percent "quit to have a baby," and 12 percent had "child care problems" (see Table 2.21).

Reasons not looking for work. About one-fifth (18 percent) of the AFDC mothers with school age children only were out of the labor force because they had "no interest in employment at present." Those interested in employment (N=36) most frequently cited "health problems" (44 percent), "lack of education" (44 percent), and "lack of job experience" (42 percent) as the reasons they were not looking for work. See Table 2.22. Nearly a quarter (22 percent) of this group had "given up looking" for work out of discouragement. Among those interested in employment but not seeing themselves as lacking education or training, the most frequently cited reasons for being out of the labor force were "health problems" (50 percent), "lacking experience" (30 percent), and "family responsibilities" (25 percent).

¹⁷ Significance test for difference between means (30.3 vs. 40.6):
F = 34.92; df = 1, 177; p < .0001.

When asked to cite the most important reason for not looking for work, about a quarter of those interested in employment cited "health problems" (23 percent) and an equal proportion cited "lacking enough education." (See Table 2.22).

Barriers to further education or job training. Four-fifths of AFDC mothers with school age children only wanted further education or training in the next year. Of the group wanting further education/training, 77 percent (N=27) reported having problems that would likely keep them from obtaining what they wanted. These respondents reported that their obtaining further education or job training was likely to be hindered by "transportation problems" (37 percent); "other family problems," for example, "their children's health problems" (30 percent); and "lack of information about programs" (26 percent). Table 2.23 lists the barriers.

PROSPECTS FOR GETTING OFF AFDC

Eighteen percent of the single mothers in this survey were former AFDC recipients. Of these 68 former AFDC recipients, 29 percent (N=20) had stopped receiving AFDC after the 1981 federal rule changes in AFDC eligibility, and 71 percent (N=48) had stopped receiving AFDC before the new eligibility requirements came into effect. Most of the 68 former AFDC recipients were White (74 percent), divorced (57 percent), and had no preschoolers at home (81 percent). They also tended to have 1 or 2 rather than 3 or more children.

The group of single mothers who stopped receiving AFDC after 1981 (N=20) tended to be age 34 or younger. Seventy-eight percent were high school graduates, including 22 percent who had attended some college. They tended to hold service, clerical, or operative positions. Twenty percent worked part-time. Most (85 percent) had annual incomes of less than \$14,000, including 40 percent with annual incomes of less than \$8,000.

In contrast, the group that stopped receiving AFDC before the new AFDC eligibility criteria (N=48) tended to be age 35 or older. Ninety-two percent were high school graduates, including 42 percent who had attended some college. They tended to hold full-time clerical or professional/technical positions. Nearly two-thirds (63 percent) had annual incomes of \$14,000 or more. Overall, their educational, occupational, and economic characteristics resembled the characteristics of single mothers who had never received AFDC.

In order to learn what characteristics are associated with getting off AFDC, this section compares the characteristics of the former AFDC recipients who stopped receiving AFDC before the 1981 changes in AFDC eligibility took effect and long-term AFDC recipients, those who have been receiving AFDC for 5 or more years and who were out of the labor force when surveyed. This examination includes only former AFDC recipients (N=32) and long-term AFDC recipients (N=52) who have been single mothers for 5 or more years.

Former AFDC recipients tended to be older than long-term AFDC recipients. They were also more likely to have a school-age child, rather than a preschooler, as their youngest child at home. Former AFDC recipients also appeared more likely than long-term AFDC recipients to have been previously married and to have 1 or 2 children rather than 3 or more children. The two groups did not differ by race.

Among those ages 25 and older, former AFDC recipients had higher educational attainment levels than long-term AFDC recipients. The vast majority (91 percent) of former AFDC recipients were high school graduates. In contrast, 46 percent of the long-term AFDC recipients had less than a high school education. The two groups did not differ by completion of vocational training.

Among those currently ages 16 to 34, finally, former AFDC recipients were more likely than long-term AFDC recipients to have become parents after their teen years (at age 20 or older). Seventy-nine percent of the long-term AFDC recipients compared with 27 percent of the former AFDC recipients became parents as teenagers. Former AFDC recipients were also more likely than long-term AFDC recipients to have been married rather than unmarried when they became parents (66 percent vs. 25 percent).

EDUCATION, VOCATIONAL TRAINING, AND ECONOMIC SELF-SUFFICIENCY

GOVERNMENT JOB TRAINING PROGRAMS

Twenty percent of the single mothers (N=76) had participated in government-sponsored job training programs at least a year before this study. Single mothers reported participating most often in the Work Incentive (WIN) program (a federal program administered by the state departments of Human Services and Economic Security designed to help people receiving AFDC to become employed through counseling and vocational training) and CETA (the Federal Comprehensive Employment and Training Act program).

Table 2.24 lists the job programs used by single mothers and shows the proportions of participants in each program who were employed when surveyed.¹⁸ About half (48 percent) of those who participated in government job programs at least a year before this study were employed when surveyed. Most (78 percent) were employed full-time. No programs stand out as having any higher or lower proportions of their past participants employed at present.

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION AND TRAINING

This examination of the relative economic benefits of high-school-only educations, vocational/technical training, and a college education includes only high school graduates ages 25 and older. First, those who completed vocational/technical training (N=53) are compared with single mothers without any formal education or training after high school graduation (N=79). Then, those who completed vocational/technical training are compared with those who attended college but did not receive a degree (N=65) as well as with those who were college graduates (N=30).¹⁹ The comparisons across the groups include work histories, occupational characteristics, and economic factors.

Single mothers who completed vocational/technical training after high school did not significantly differ from those without additional training after high school by employment status, AFDC status, or annual income. Among those in the labor force, those with vocational/technical training were as likely as those without additional training to be unemployed in the past year. Among those who were employed, the two groups did not significantly differ by job type, occupational status, or occupational advancement. It appeared, however, that those with vocational/technical training tended to have higher-status jobs than those without additional training (a mean of 38.7 vs. a mean of 33.8). For example, those with additional training appeared more likely than those without additional training to hold professional/technical positions (16 percent versus 4 percent) and appeared less likely to hold sales positions (see **Table 2.25**).

¹⁸ Respondents who said that they had ever participated in manpower or government-sponsored job training programs were asked to specify the name and type of program. Responses were grouped into the categories in **Table 2.24**.

¹⁹ College graduates includes both those with 2 year Associate of Arts degrees and those with baccalaureate degrees.

SINGLE MOTHERS: PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT JOB TRAINING PROGRAMS^a
 Table 2.24. BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS (MULTIPLE RESPONSES INCLUDED)

	PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS		CURRENTLY EMPLOYED PARTICIPANTS	
	(N=75)		(N=36)	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent of All Participants</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent of Participants in each program</u>
WIN	34	45.3	16	47.1
CETA	26	34.7	13	50.0
Manpower	6	8.0	3	50.0
Various Youth Programs	5	6.7	2	40.0
WEP ^b	4	5.3	1	25.0
U.S. Armed Services	2	2.7	2	100.0
Other	6	8.0	4	66.7

^a Refers to participation in programs at least one year before this study

^b Refers to the Work Experience Project, an alternative demonstration project to the Work Incentive Program (WIN).

EMPLOYED SINGLE MOTHERS (HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES, AGES 25+ ONLY):
 Table 2.25. OCCUPATION BY TRAINING AFTER HIGH SCHOOL

OCCUPATION	COMPLETED VOCATIONAL/TECHNICAL TRAINING ^a	NO TRAINING AFTER HIGH SCHOOL
	(N=32)	(N=51)
	Percent	Percent
Clerical	50.0	41.2
Service	18.8	25.5
Professional/Technical/Managerial	15.6	3.9
Sales	0.0	11.8
Operatives	6.3	9.8
Laborers	6.3	2.0
Crafts	3.1	5.9
Total	100.0	100.0

^a Completed vocational/technical training in a technical institute, trade or business school, hospital, or community college

Single mothers who attended college, including those without college degrees, tended to fare better economically than those with vocational/technical training. The college-educated groups were less likely to receive AFDC, appeared more likely to be employed full-time and less likely to be unemployed in the past year than were those with vocational/technical training (see Table 2.26). Occupational status and the likelihood of occupational advancement appeared to be greater among those who attended college than among those who received vocational/technical training. Those who were college graduates also appeared more likely than those who received vocational training to hold professional/technical/managerial positions (44 percent vs. 16 percent) and less likely to hold service positions (4 percent vs. 19 percent). The numbers in these three groups are small, and, consequently, these differences are not significant at the .01 level and should be interpreted with caution.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

SINGLE MOTHERS IN THE LABOR FORCE

Part-time and Full-time Employment

Fifty-three percent (N=206) of the 387 single mothers in this survey were employed. More than three-quarters were employed full-time. Part-time employment (1-34 hours per week) was more likely for those age 24 and younger and for those with a preschool child at home.

Four-fifths of employed single mothers worked during the day. Those working part-time were more likely to work non-daytime hours (i.e., between 7:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.). They were also more likely than those working full-time to have adjusted their working hours for compatibility with family responsibilities (56 percent vs. 27 percent). Most (80 percent) employed single mothers were satisfied with their present work schedules. About half (46 percent) of those working part-time wanted to increase their work hours. More than half of the current part-time workers (52 percent) had no full-time work experience in the past five years; while 7 in 10 of those employed full-time had been working full-time for the past five years.

The largest group of employed single mothers held clerical positions (42 percent), followed by service occupations such as waitress or nursing aide (21 percent), professional/technical positions (15 percent), and operatives such as assemblers and inspectors (9 percent).

Table 2.26. SINGLE MOTHERS^a: VOCATIONAL TRAINING VERSUS COLLEGE EDUCATION

	Received Vocational/Technical Training ^b	Attended Some College (No degree)	College Graduate ^c
	(N=53) Percent	(N=65) Percent	(N=30) Percent
<u>EMPLOYMENT STATUS</u>			
Full-time	45.3	66.2	60.0
Part-time	15.1	13.8	16.7
Unemployed	15.1	4.6	10.0
Out of labor force	24.5	15.4	13.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
<u>AFDC STATUS^d</u>			
Yes	47.2	18.5	20.0
No	52.8	81.5	80.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
<u>WEEKS UNEMPLOYED PAST YEAR (Those in Work Force Only)</u>			
	(N=40) Percent	(N=55) Percent	(N=26) Percent
0 weeks	65.0	83.6	92.3
1-52 weeks	35.0	16.4	7.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

^a Includes only those ages 25 and older who graduated high school^b Completed vocational/technical training in a technical institute, trade or business school, hospital, or community college^c Includes those with 2 and 4 year college degrees^d Receiving AFDC when surveyed

Note: Significance test for employment status: chi square = 6.68; df = 6; NS

Significance test for AFDC: chi square = 13.17; df = 2; p < .01

Significance test for weeks unemployed past year: chi square = 8.30; df = 2; NS

Two-thirds of all employed single mothers held jobs that provided fringe benefits. This included 80 percent of full-time workers but only 31 percent of part-time workers. Full-time workers were more likely to hold clerical positions and less likely to be operatives or service workers than were part-time workers. More than half saw their "opportunities for advancement" as less than adequate, and 4 in 10 viewed their "pay" as less than adequate.

Employed AFDC Recipients

Nearly 1 in 5 (N=36) of the employed single mothers were also receiving AFDC. Most of these women (64 percent) worked part-time. Those younger than age 25, racial minorities, never married, and mothers with a preschool child were more likely than other employed single mothers to be AFDC recipients. Eighty-nine percent of the employed AFDC recipients completed high school, but they appeared less likely than other employed single mothers to have attended college (18 percent vs. 44 percent). Those in the employed AFDC group tended to have less full-time work experience and lower-status occupations (e.g., service occupations) than other employed single mothers.

Seventy-one percent of the employed AFDC recipients reported having problems that affected their ability to find a better job, most frequently citing "lack of education," "lack of experience," and "lack of affordable day care." For the large majority (81 percent) who wanted to obtain education or training in the next year, "cost" (64 percent), "transportation problems (36 percent), and "lack of affordable and reliable day care" (27 percent) were reported as obstacles.

The Self-Supporting, Working Poor

Among single mothers working full-time and not receiving AFDC (N=143), more than a third had incomes of less than \$14,000 a year, including 15 percent with annual incomes of less than \$10,000. This group of 52 single mothers tended to work in lower-status, service occupations such as nursing aides, child care workers and cooks. Single mothers in this group did not significantly differ demographically (age, race, marital status, age of youngest child, number of children) or educationally from those with higher incomes and those working in higher-status occupations. Compared with single mothers with higher incomes, however, they had significantly less full-time work experience in the past five years. About a quarter of the "self-

supporting, working poor" were former AFDC recipients who stopped receiving AFDC after new eligibility criteria took effect in 1982.

Sixty percent (N=31) of the single mothers in this lower-income group believed that finding a better job would be difficult. The "lack of education or training" (61 percent), and "the lack of experience" (39 percent) were viewed as the chief obstacles. Fifty-six percent (N=29) wanted to pursue further education or training in the next year, but they considered "cost" (39 percent) and "the lack of time" (30 percent) to be likely problems.

The Unemployed

Twenty-six percent (N=62) of the single mothers in the labor force when surveyed had been unemployed for at least a week in the past year, including 14 percent who were unemployed when surveyed. Those younger than age 25, racial minorities, never married, and mothers with preschool children were more likely to have been unemployed in the past year than were other single mothers. Those in the unemployed group tended to have had less full-time work experience and to have held lower-status occupations (e.g., service and operative) than those who had not been unemployed in the past year. They also were more likely to be current AFDC recipients than were those who had not been unemployed in the past year. Those unemployed when surveyed viewed their "lack of experience" (24 percent) and the "lack of job openings" (24 percent) as the main reasons for being unable to find employment.

Implications: Employment and Self-Sufficiency

Several recent studies have discussed the underrepresentation of women in higher-status, higher-paying professional/technical occupations and the concentration of women in lower-paying clerical and service occupations. These studies conclude that the kinds of jobs many women take allow greater flexibility in order to fulfill family responsibilities but that the normal wage rates in those jobs cannot provide sufficient incomes to support a family. In addition to the low pay, these occupations, based on the assumption that the employees will probably be intermittently employed, are structured to provide few fringe benefits, limited opportunities for advancement, often part-time or temporary employment, and little or no job security (Cassetty, 1982; Duncan, 1984; Moen and Skinner, 1983).

Evidence of these labor market factors can be found in the employment and occupational characteristics of single mothers in this survey. As a

consequence, self-supporting single mothers with low incomes cannot expect to significantly increase their earnings by gaining full-time work experience in occupations characterized by low pay and few opportunities for advancement. For those whose preference or commitment to work is part-time, often because of competing demands of family responsibilities, these labor market factors mean that the jobs they take likely will not lead to stable, full-time employment. For those employed and receiving AFDC, especially those working part-time, these labor market factors limit their experience to low-paying and lower-status occupations that are less likely to provide the income levels and fringe benefits they need to make the transition from public assistance to self-support worthwhile and possible. The majority of each of these groups view a lack of education or training as an obstacle to finding a better job, but they are hampered by insufficient resources (tuition money, transportation, and day care) and inadequate time to pursue the education or training that they want.

Single mothers, then, face the same labor force issues as the growing number of other women entering the labor force, albeit complicated by the necessity to manage a home alone and raise their children at the same time. Nowhere is the interplay of labor force and demographic trends more graphic, however, than in the growing number of families in which the sole wage earner is at a disadvantage due to wage or occupational factors beyond her control. For those single mothers already well established in lower-status, lower-paying jobs, the achievement of financial independence without their having to make the difficult change to different, higher-paying occupations would require fundamental changes in the labor market itself. Improving their economic status without such changes would require large supplements to their own low earnings through such sources of income as AFDC or child support payments.

SINGLE MOTHERS OUT OF THE LABOR FORCE AND RECEIVING AFDC

Thirty-six percent (N=138) of the 387 single mothers in this survey were out of the labor force and receiving AFDC. Of this group of 138 single mothers, 94 (68 percent) had at least one preschooler at home, and 44 (32 percent) had a school age child as the youngest child at home. Most single mothers with and without preschool children would work if possible. Nearly two-thirds of those whose youngest was a preschooler and four-fifths of those whose youngest was of school age were "interested in employment at present." The findings show, however, that single mothers who were out of the labor force

and receiving AFDC exhibit varying degrees of work potential and face numerous barriers to full participation in the labor force.

Characteristics of AFDC Mothers of Preschoolers

Among those with a preschool child, two-thirds had one or two children, including 42 percent with only one child. Eighty-eight percent of those with two or more children were receiving AFDC when they had their last child. Sixty-one percent were high school graduates, including 12 percent who attended some college. Twenty percent had received vocational training. They averaged one year of full-time work experience in the past five years, principally in lower-status, service positions. The average length of time since they were last employed was 3.0 years.

Characteristics of AFDC Mothers of School Age Children

Among those whose youngest dependent child was in school, three-quarters had only one or two children, including 34 percent with only one child. Three-quarters of those with two or more children were receiving AFDC when they had their last child. Slightly over half (55 percent) were high school graduates, including 9 percent who attended some college. Twenty-one percent received vocational/technical training. They averaged less than a year of full-time work experience in the past five years. The average length of time since they were last employed was 6.6 years. Nearly half last worked in low-status service occupations.

Employment Barriers

Both groups frequently reported that "lack of education," "lack of work experience," and "transportation problems" were barriers to holding a job and reasons for not being in the labor force. "The lack of affordable day care" was another barrier frequently cited by those whose youngest was a preschool child.

These barriers were not the whole picture, however. Both groups also frequently cited "family responsibilities," such as having to care for children with chronic health problems, that hamper their employability. Those with a preschool child also frequently cited "wanting to stay at home with their children until they are older" as a reason for not being in the labor force or as affecting their ability to hold a job. Finally, "personal health problems"

apparently limited the employability of a significant number of those whose youngest was of school age.

Implications

These findings raise several issues for policies and programs aimed at single mothers who are out of the labor force and receiving AFDC.

First, it is important to recognize that not all single mothers are able to work and to support their families without public assistance. Forty-five percent of those with preschool children have limited ability to hold a job due to child rearing responsibilities and commitments. Mothers of older children, moreover, are often encumbered by personal health and family problems, including having to care for a child in poor health.

Second, preparation for employment is necessary as early as possible for AFDC recipients with one or two young children. Similar to our findings, other studies have found that AFDC recipients who have completed high school, who have full-time work experience, and who have few children were the most employable (AuClaire, 1979; Rein, 1982). Exempting those with preschool children from training and work incentives diminishes their employment chances. These mothers need further education and work experience in order to earn an adequate wage and to get off AFDC. AFDC policy cannot continue to expect that the commitment of mothers to their children always takes precedence over employment when the children are young, while at the same time expecting mothers without preschool children to become self-supporting after being minimally educated and out of the labor force for so many years.

Finally, it is evident that job training, transportation, and adequate child care arrangements are key ingredients towards making single mothers self-supporting by improving their employability. Employment and training efforts will have to address other issues as well, however, most notably the need for basic education and career guidance. Many single mothers have less than a high school education. Still others have only minimal previous full-time work experience in low-paying jobs that if obtained again will likely not provide opportunities for advancement or fringe benefits.

CHAPTER THREE

SINGLE PARENT FAMILIES: FINANCIAL AND HOUSEHOLD CIRCUMSTANCES

This chapter assesses the financial and household circumstances of single parents. It first examines their sources of income with a particular look at noncash benefits (food stamps, medical assistance, and fuel assistance) and child support payments. It then examines the characteristics of single parent housing and their housing costs, the child care arrangements of single mothers, the ability of single parents to provide their families with material necessities, the transportation of single parents and their children and legal concerns among single parents.

SOURCES OF INCOME

This section first examines the sources of income that single parents relied upon for all or some of their 1983 family cash incomes. It then examines other sources of noncash income -- food stamps, medical assistance, and fuel assistance.

WAGES

Forty-two percent (N=162) of the single mothers and 85 percent (N=29) of the single fathers reported that their own wages, savings, and investments provided all or most of their family income in 1983 (see **Table 3.1**). For 18 percent of the single mothers and 6 percent of the single fathers these sources provided some (rather than most or all) of their family income. It is of interest in this context to recall that single mothers age 35 and older, White, divorced, and those without a preschool child were more likely than other single mothers to be employed full-time and to not be receiving any income from AFDC (see **Tables 1.18** and **1.21** in Chapter 1).

AFDC

Forty-three percent (N=164) of the single mothers in this survey and one single father received all or most of their family income from AFDC in 1983

Table 3.1. AMOUNT OF INCOME FROM VARIOUS SOURCES BY SEX OF PARENT

	FEMALES				MALES			
	All ^a	Some ^b	None	Total	All ^a	Some ^b	None	Total
Own wages	42.0	18.2	39.9	100.0	85.3	5.9	8.8	100.0
AFDC	42.5	12.4	45.1	100.0	2.9	2.9	94.1	100.0
Child support payments ^c	1.2	47.8	50.9	100.0	0.0	6.0	94.0	100.0
Parents	0.3	9.8	89.9	100.0	0.0	8.8	91.2	100.0
Children	0.0	3.6	96.4	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	100.0
Social Security	1.6	5.4	93.0	100.0	5.9	2.9	91.2	100.0
Unemployment compensation	0.5	2.9	96.6	100.0	0.0	5.9	94.1	100.0
Other relatives	0.8	1.5	97.7	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	100.0
Disability insurance	0.0	0.0	100.0	100.0	2.9	0.0	97.1	100.0
Other sources (life insurance, friends, alimony, inheritance, V.A.)	0.0	5.1	94.9	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	100.0

^a Includes all or most^b Includes some or little^c Limited to those not on AFDC with another parent still alive

(see **Table 3.1**). In addition, twelve percent (N=48) of the single mothers and one single father received part (i.e., some) of their incomes from AFDC in 1983. The characteristics of single mothers receiving AFDC were presented in **Tables 1.18** and **1.21** in Chapter 1. Briefly, results showed that young single mothers, racial minorities, never married and separated mothers, and those with a preschool child were more likely than other single mothers to be out of the labor force and receiving AFDC.

CHILD SUPPORT PAYMENTS

This section includes only the 161 single mothers and the 31 single fathers who were not receiving AFDC and whose children had another parent still alive. Among this group of single parents, 49 percent of the single mothers and 6 percent of the single fathers reported receiving some of their income from child support payments in 1983 (see **Table 3.1**), including only 1 percent of the single mothers who received all or most of their income from that source. According to November 1984 figures provided by Ramsey County Income Maintenance Division, among 5,989 families receiving AFDC for whom child support payments were awarded, payments had been received for 17 percent of the families.

In this survey, White single mothers were more likely than single mothers from other racial groups to receive some income from child support payments (54 percent vs. 18 percent).¹ Divorced single mothers (61 percent) were more likely than separated (33 percent), widowed (25 percent), and never married (17 percent) to receive some income from child support payments.² Families in which the children spent any time at all with another parent were also more likely to receive some income from child support payments compared to families in which the children never saw another parent (63 percent vs. 24 percent).³ Those who never received AFDC as single mothers (N=97) were more likely than those who formerly received AFDC (N=64) to receive child support payments (66 percent vs. 23 percent).⁴ Among single mothers, income from child support payments was not

¹ corrected chi square = 8.35; df = 1; p < .01.

² chi square = 19.14; df = 3; p < .001. These are based on current marital status. Widows may have child support payments from previous husbands.

³ corrected chi square = 21.01; df = 1; p < .0001.

⁴ corrected chi square = 26.25; df = 1; p < .0001.

related to the mother's age, the age of her youngest child, or the number of children at home. It was also not related to total annual income. Among employed single mothers, it appeared that those employed part-time were more likely to receive child support payments than those employed full-time.

Those not collecting child support payments were asked to cite the reasons (from a standard set of possible reasons) that they were not collecting such payments. Among the 69 single mothers who responded, the most frequently cited reasons were the other parent's "not being able to afford to pay" (28 percent), the other parent's "refusing to pay" (22 percent), the mother's "wanting nothing to do with the other parent" (17 percent), the other parent's "not being required to pay" (15 percent), and the mother's "not knowing the other parent's whereabouts" (12 percent).

OTHER SOURCES OF CASH INCOME

Reliance on other sources for all or some family income tended to be small for both single mothers and single fathers. Ten percent of single mothers received financial support from their parents. Nine percent of single fathers received income from Social Security. Proportions relying on such sources as children, other relatives, unemployment compensation, disability insurance, or alimony were even smaller (see **Table 3.1**).

NONCASH BENEFITS

Table 3.2 lists the proportions of single mothers and single fathers who received food stamps, medical assistance, or fuel assistance in the past year. Fifty-two percent of single mothers and 9 percent of single fathers received food stamps. Fifty-five percent of single mothers and 3 percent of single fathers received medical assistance. Nineteen percent of single mothers and 9 percent of single fathers received fuel assistance in the past year. Single mothers were significantly more likely than single fathers to receive food stamps and medical assistance. The receipt of fuel assistance was not significantly related to the sex of the single parent, however.

Among single mothers, the demographic characteristics of the recipients of food stamps and medical assistance followed the same pattern as the characteristics of AFDC recipients. That is, young single mothers, racial minorities, never married and separated, and those with a preschool child were more likely than other single mothers to receive food stamps and medical assistance. Fuel assistance, however, was not associated with age, race,

Table 3.2. NONCASH BENEFITS IN PAST YEAR BY SEX OF PARENT

	SINGLE MOTHERS (N=387) Percent	SINGLE FATHERS (N=34) Percent
<u>FOOD STAMPS</u>		
Yes	51.7	8.8
No	48.3	91.2
Total	100.0	100.0
<u>MEDICAL ASSISTANCE</u>		
Yes	54.5	2.9
No	45.5	97.1
Total	100.0	100.0
<u>FUEL ASSISTANCE</u>		
Yes	19.1	8.8
No	80.9	91.2
Total	100.0	100.0

Note: Significance test for food stamps: corrected chi square = 21.31; df = 1; $p < .0001$

Significance test for medical assistance: corrected chi square = 31.23; df = 1; $p < .0001$

Significance test for fuel assistance: corrected chi square = 1.58; df = 1; NS

marital status, or age of youngest child. It was significantly related to having 3 or more children at home. (Larger families were less likely to live in apartments, which frequently included heat as part of the rent.) All of the noncash benefits, finally, were not associated with the living arrangements of single mothers (living with children only vs. living with another adult in the household). See **Table 3.3**.

HOUSING

HOUSING TENURE

About two-thirds of the 421 single parents in this survey (68 percent) were renters; 30 percent were home owners, and 2 percent lived rent-free. Single mothers appeared less likely to be home owners and more likely to be renters than single fathers (see **Table 3.4**). For perspective, according to the 1980 Census, 19 percent of all family households with children in Ramsey County were renters and 81 percent were home owners (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1983A).

Among the 379 single mothers who paid for housing, those older than age 34; White single mothers; divorced, separated, and widowed; and those whose youngest child was age 6 or older were more likely than other single mothers to be homeowners. Those younger than age 35, racial minorities, never married, and those whose youngest child was a preschooler were more likely than other single mothers to be renters (see **Table 3.5**). Tenure was not related to the number of children at home or to the presence or absence of another adult in the household.

Housing tenure was strongly related to other economic characteristics. Among single mothers who paid for housing, for example, AFDC recipients were more likely to be renters than were single mothers not receiving AFDC (92 percent vs. 47 percent).⁵ Those with incomes of \$14,000 or higher were more

⁵ Significance test for AFDC (yes vs. no): corrected chi square = 88.34; df = 1; p < .0001.

Table 3.3. SINGLE MOTHERS: RECEIPT OF VARIOUS NONCASH BENEFITS BY DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

	AGE			RACE		MARITAL STATUS				AGE OF YOUNGEST CHILD		NUMBER OF CHILDREN		
	16-24 (N=68) Percent	25-34 (N=148) Percent	35+ (N=171) Percent	White (N=282) Percent	Other (N=105) Percent	Divorced (N=179) Percent	Never Married (N=119) Percent	Separated (N=55) Percent	Widowed (N=34) Percent	Ages 0-5 (N=162) Percent	Ages 6-17 (N=225) Percent	1 (N=178) Percent	2 (N=131) Percent	3+ (N=78) Percent
<u>FOOD STAMPS IN PAST YEAR</u>														
Yes	80.9	60.1	32.7	44.0	72.4	39.1	74.8	58.2	26.5	72.2	36.9	44.4	48.9	73.1
No	19.1	39.9	67.3	56.0	27.6	60.9	25.2	41.8	73.5	27.8	63.1	55.6	51.1	26.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<u>MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IN PAST YEAR</u>														
Yes	86.8	58.1	38.6	46.1	77.1	40.8	79.8	58.2	32.4	75.9	39.1	49.4	48.9	75.6
No	13.2	41.9	61.4	53.9	22.9	59.2	20.2	41.8	67.6	24.1	60.9	50.6	51.1	24.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<u>FUEL ASSISTANCE IN PAST YEAR</u>														
Yes	19.1	21.6	17.0	17.4	23.8	20.7	16.8	20.0	17.6	24.1	15.6	8.4	22.9	37.2
No	80.9	78.4	83.0	82.6	76.2	79.3	83.2	80.0	82.4	75.9	84.4	91.6	77.1	62.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: Underlined percentages indicate significant differences at the .01 level.

Food Stamps

Significance test for age: chi square = 52.00; df = 2; $p < .0001$
 Significance test for race: corrected chi square = 23.60; df = 1; $p < .0001$
 Significance test for marital status: chi square = 46.37; df = 3; $p < .0001$
 Significance test for age of youngest child: corrected chi square = 45.65; df = 1; $p < .0001$
 Significance test for number of children: chi square = 18.52; df = 2; $p < .001$

Medical Assistance

Significance test for age: chi square = 46.77; df = 2; $p < .0001$
 Significance test for race: corrected chi square = 28.50; df = 1; $p < .0001$
 Significance test for marital status: chi square = 51.41; df = 3; $p < .0001$
 Significance test for age of youngest child: corrected chi square = 50.01; df = 1; $p < .0001$
 Significance test for number of children: chi square = 17.58; df = 2; $p < .001$

Fuel Assistance

Significance test for age: chi square = 1.12; df = 2; NS
 Significance test for race: corrected chi square = 1.65; df = 1; NS
 Significance test for marital status: chi square = .77; df = 3; NS
 Significance test for age of youngest child: corrected chi square = 3.89; df = 1; NS
 Significance test for number of children: chi square = 30.82; df = 2; $p < .0001$

Table 3.4. CURRENT HOUSING TENURE BY SEX OF PARENT

	ALL		FEMALE		MALE	
	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number
Rent	67.9	286	69.5	269	50.0	17
Own	29.9	126	28.4	110	47.1	16
Rent-free	2.1	9	2.1	8	2.9	1
Total	100.0	421	100.0	387	100.0	34

Note: Significance test for sex (rent vs. own): corrected chi square = 4.54; df = 1; NS

Table 3.5. SINGLE MOTHERS: CURRENT HOUSING TENURE^a BY DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

	AGE			RACE		MARITAL STATUS				AGE OF YOUNGEST CHILD	
	16-24	25-34	35+	White	Other	Divorced	Never Married	Separated	Widowed	Ages 0-5	Ages 6-17
	(N=64)	(N=146)	(N=169)	(N=275)	(N=104)	(N=177)	(N=116)	(N=53)	(N=33)	(N=156)	(N=223)
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Rent	<u>98.4</u>	<u>85.6</u>	<u>47.9</u>	<u>63.3</u>	<u>91.3</u>	<u>58.8</u>	<u>95.7</u>	<u>71.7</u>	<u>48.5</u>	<u>87.2</u>	<u>59.6</u>
Own	<u>1.6</u>	<u>14.4</u>	<u>52.1</u>	<u>36.7</u>	<u>8.7</u>	<u>41.2</u>	<u>4.3</u>	<u>28.3</u>	<u>51.5</u>	<u>12.8</u>	<u>40.4</u>
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

^a Includes only those who pay for housing

Note: Underlined percentages signify significant differences at the .01 level.

Note: Significance test for age: chi square = 82.20; df = 2; p < .0001

Significance test for race: corrected chi square = 27.52; df = 1; p < .0001

Significance test for marital status: chi square = 55.34; df = 3; p < .0001

Significance test for age of youngest child: corrected chi square = 32.47; df = 1; p < .0001

likely to be homeowners (60 percent) than were those making \$8,000-\$14,000 (33 percent) or less than \$8,000 (10 percent).⁶

HOUSING TYPES

Table 3.6 lists the proportions of single parents living in various types of housing. Thirty-seven percent of the single parents in this survey resided in single family homes; 28 percent lived in apartments; 20 percent lived in duplexes; 12 percent lived in other multi-family dwellings, and 4 percent resided in mobile homes. Single mothers and single fathers did not significantly differ by housing type.

Among single mothers, those age 35 or older, White single mothers, divorced or widowed, and those whose youngest child was of school age were most often living in single family homes. In contrast, those age 24 or younger, racial minorities, never married, and those with preschoolers were more likely to reside in apartments or other multi-family dwellings (see Table 3.7). Single mothers with one or two children were about equally likely to live in single family homes, apartments, or other multi-family dwellings. Those with 3 or more children, however, were less likely to reside in apartments (see Table 3.7). Single mothers having another adult present in their household appeared more likely to reside in single family homes than those who lived with their children only (48 percent vs. 33 percent).

HOUSING COSTS

This section examines the average monthly housing costs of three groups of single parents: renters paying publicly subsidized rent, renters paying non-subsidized rent, and owners making house payments. It also examines the proportion of family income going to pay for housing. Recipients of housing subsidies are required to pay 30 percent of their gross income for their housing. Among non-subsidized renters and owners, payments that exceed 30 percent of total family income are generally considered to be excessive. Overall, 39 percent of the single mothers in this survey (N=147) paid more than 30 percent of their income for housing, including 10 percent who paid more than 60 percent. In contrast, 12 percent of the single fathers (N=4) paid more than

⁶ Significance test for income (less than \$8,000; \$8,000-\$14,000; \$14,000+): chi square = 85.46; df = 2; p < .0001.

Table 3.6. TYPE OF HOUSING BY SEX

	ALL		FEMALE		MALE	
	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number
Single family home	36.6	154	35.7	138	47.1	16
Apartment	27.5	116	27.6	107	26.5	9
Duplex	20.2	85	20.4	79	17.6	6
Four-plex	9.7	41	10.6	41	0.0	0
Mobile home	3.6	15	3.4	13	5.9	2
Townhouse	1.4	6	1.6	6	0.0	0
Triplex	1.0	4	0.8	3	2.9	1
Total	100.0	421	100.0	387	100.0	34

Table 3.7. SINGLE MOTHERS: HOUSING TYPES BY DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

	ALL		AGE			RACE		MARITAL STATUS				AGE OF YOUNGEST CHILD		NUMBER OF CHILDREN		
	Percent	Number	16-24	25-34	35+	White	Other	Divorced	Never Married	Separated	Widowed	Ages 0-5	Ages 6-17	1	2	3+
			(N=68)	(N=148)	(N=171)	(N=282)	(N=105)	(N=179)	(N=119)	(N=55)	(N=34)	(N=162)	(N=225)	(N=178)	(N=131)	(N=78)
			Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Single family homes	35.7	138	10.3	28.4	52.0	41.1	21.0	41.9	18.5	34.5	64.7	22.8	44.9	30.9	38.2	42.3
Duplex and other multi-family ^a	33.3	129	35.3	35.1	31.0	26.6	51.4	31.3	39.5	36.4	17.6	34.6	32.4	30.3	29.8	46.2
Apartments	27.6	107	54.4	33.1	12.3	27.7	27.6	22.3	40.3	25.5	14.7	40.1	18.7	36.0	26.7	10.3
Mobile homes	3.4	13	0.0	3.4	4.7	4.6	0.0	4.5	1.7	3.6	2.9	2.5	4.0	2.8	5.3	1.3
Total	100.0	387	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

^a Other multi-family includes triplexes, four-plexes, and townhouses.

Note: Significance tests are for single family homes, duplex and other multi-family, and apartments

Significance test for age: chi square = 60.94; df = 4; p < .0001

Significance test for race: chi square = 22.25; df = 2; p < .0001

Significance test for marital status: chi square = 34.63; df = 6; p < .0001

Significance test for youngest: chi square = 28.56; df = 2; p < .0001

Significance test for number of children: chi square = 19.78; df = 4; p < .001

30 percent of their income for housing, including 3 percent who paid more than 60 percent. These and subsequent figures on the proportion of family income going for housing costs are based on rents (some of which include heat) or house payments at the time of the interview (March-August 1984) and family income (grouped into several categories) for the previous year (1983). Despite the limitations of incorporating two different years and of using a categorized income distribution, the figures provide a useful picture of housing costs relative to income. Moreover, because the percentages were calculated using the top of each income category in the distribution, the figures should be considered conservative estimates of housing costs relative to income.

Among single mothers, those younger than age 35, mothers whose youngest child was age 5 or younger, those whose annual incomes were less than \$14,000, and those receiving AFDC were more likely than other single mothers to pay more than 30 percent of their family income for housing. In addition, never married mothers appeared more likely than other single mothers to pay more than 30 percent of their family income for housing. The proportion of income going to housing costs among all single mothers was not related to race, the number of children at home, or to the type of living arrangement.

Subsidized Rents

Twenty percent of the single parents (N=86) participated in subsidized housing programs, including 11 percent who had Section 8 housing certificates and 9 percent who resided in low-income housing. All of the respondents in this group were single mothers. The housing costs for this group of 86 single mothers averaged \$115 a month.

Racial minorities and those who were never married or separated were more likely than other single mothers to participate in subsidized housing programs. Receiving housing rental assistance was not significantly related to the respondent's age, age of the youngest child at home, the number of children at home, or to the presence or absence of another adult in the household (see **Table 3.8**). AFDC recipients were more likely than those not receiving AFDC to participate in subsidized housing programs (37 percent vs. 6 percent).⁷ Eighty seven percent (N=75) of those receiving rental subsidies were also receiving

⁷ Significance test for AFDC (subsidy vs. no subsidy): chi square = 51.78; df = 1; p < .0001.

Table 3.8. SINGLE MOTHERS: PARTICIPATION IN SUBSIDIZED HOUSING PROGRAMS^a BY DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

	ALL		AGE			RACE		MARITAL STATUS				AGE OF YOUNGEST CHILD	
			16-24	25-34	35+	White	Other	Divorced	Never Married	Separated	Widowed	Ages 0-5	Ages 6-17
	Percent	Number	(N=68)	(N=148)	(N=171)	(N=282)	(N=105)	(N=179)	(N=55)	(N=34)	(N=119)	(N=162)	(N=225)
			Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Received public subsidy for rent	22.2	86	23.5	24.3	19.9	<u>14.5</u>	<u>42.3</u>	<u>16.8</u>	<u>31.1</u>	<u>29.1</u>	<u>8.8</u>	25.9	19.6
No rent subsidy	77.8	301	76.5	75.7	80.1	<u>85.5</u>	<u>57.1</u>	<u>83.2</u>	<u>68.9</u>	<u>70.9</u>	<u>91.2</u>	<u>74.1</u>	<u>80.4</u>
Total	100.0	387	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

^a Includes Section B and public housing

Note: Underlined percentages indicate significant differences at the .01 level.

Significance test for age: chi square = .99; df = 2; NS

Significance test for race: corrected chi square = 33.88; df = 1; p < .0001

Significance test for marital status: chi square = 13.45; df = 3; p < .01

Significance test for age of youngest child: corrected chi square = 1.86; df = 1; NS

AFDC when surveyed. Among the 94 out-of-the-labor-force AFDC recipients with preschoolers at home, 30 percent (N=28) participated in subsidized housing programs, and among the 44 out-of-the-labor-force AFDC recipients whose youngest child was age 6 or older, 46 percent (N=20) participated in subsidized housing programs.

Non-Subsidized Rents

Among the 200 single parents who resided in non-subsidized rental housing, the average monthly payment at the time of the survey was \$319. The range was from \$6 to \$590 a month. Thirteen respondents in this group lived in family owned property and paid reduced rents, and 10 respondents paid reduced rents because they were caretakers of their apartment buildings. **Table 3.9** lists the rental costs by sex of the parent. Single mothers and single fathers did not significantly differ by the amounts of rent they paid each month.

Among non-subsidized renters, single mothers, however, paid proportionately more of their family income for rental expenses than did single fathers. **Table 3.10** shows that 68 percent of the single mothers paid more than 30 percent of their family income for rental expenses, including 18 percent who paid more than 60 percent of their income for rent. In contrast, 18 percent of the single fathers paid more than 30 percent of their family income for rental housing expenses, including 6 percent who paid more than 60 percent of their family income for rent.

Among single mothers who paid non-subsidized rent, those younger than age 25; those whose annual incomes were less than \$14,000, especially those with incomes of less than \$8,000 a year; and those receiving AFDC were more likely than other single mothers to pay more than 30 percent of their family income for rent. The proportion of income going to housing costs among renters was not significantly related to race, marital status, the number of children at home, or to the type of living arrangement (e.g., having another adult in the house).

Owners

Among the thirty percent in this survey who were home owners (N=126), the average monthly housing payment was \$282. The payments ranged from \$0 to \$1111 per month. **Table 3.9** shows the housing costs by sex of the parent for owners. The average housing payments for single mothers and single fathers did not significantly differ.

Table 3.9. HOUSING COSTS BY HOUSING TENURE AND SEX OF PARENT

	RENTERS ^a			OWNERS		
	All	Females	Males	All	Females	Males
	(N=195)	(N=178)	(N=17)	(N=125)	(N=109)	(N=16)
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
<u>HOUSING COSTS PER MONTH</u>						
less than \$100	1.5	1.1	5.9	11.2	11.0	12.5
\$100 - \$199	6.7	7.3	0.0	20.0	20.2	18.8
\$200 - \$299	33.3	33.1	35.3	28.0	27.5	31.3
\$300 - \$399	37.9	38.8	29.4	19.2	21.1	6.3
\$400 - \$499	15.9	15.7	17.6	12.0	11.9	12.5
\$500+	4.6	3.9	11.8	9.6	8.3	18.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

^a Includes only those not participating in subsidized housing programs and those paying rent

Note: 5 missing cases for renters and one missing case for owners

Renters

All: mean = 318.7; S.D. = 93.5

Female: mean = 317.1; S.D. = 91.0

Male: mean = 334.5; S.D. = 118.0

Significance test: $F = .53$; $df = 1, 193$; NS

Owners

All: mean = 281.5; S.D. = 169.7

Female: mean = 275.1; S.D. = 150.4

Male: mean = 325.4; S.D. = 269.7

Significance test: $F = 1.23$; $df = 1, 123$; NS

Table 3.10. PROPORTION OF FAMILY INCOME GOING FOR HOUSING COSTS BY HOUSING TENURE AND SEX OF PARENT

	ALL		RENTERS ^a		OWNERS	
	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males
	(N=376)	(N=34)	(N=177)	(N=17)	(N=108)	(N=16)
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
PERCENTAGE OF FAMILY INCOME GOING TO PAY RENT OR HOUSE PAYMENTS						
30 percent or less	60.9	88.2	31.6	82.4	82.4	93.8
31 to 60 percent	29.0	8.8	50.3	11.8	13.9	6.2
61 percent or more	10.1	2.9	18.1	5.9	3.7	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

^a Includes only those not participating in subsidized housing programs and those paying rent (i.e., excludes rent-free)

Note: Significance test for renters (male vs. female): chi square = 17.32; df = 2; p < .001
 Significance test for owners (male vs. female): chi square = 1.44; df = 2; NS
 Significance test for all (male vs. female): chi square = 10.01; df = 2; p < .01

Among home owners, single mothers paid proportionately more of their family income for housing payments than did single fathers. Eighteen percent of the single mothers compared with only 6 percent of the single fathers paid more than 30 percent of their family income for housing payments (see **Table 3.10**). Among single mothers, those age 34 and younger were more likely than older single mothers to pay more than 30 percent of their income for housing. The proportion of family income going for housing costs was not significantly related to any other demographic characteristics.

CHOICE OF PRESENT HOUSING

Single parents were asked to cite the main reason that they chose to live in their present housing. Their answers, grouped into several categories in **Table 3.11**, most frequently fell into the category "affordability" (44 percent), followed by "location" (31 percent), and "features" (21 percent). Single mothers and single fathers moved to or stayed in their present housing for similar reasons.

Fifty-four percent of the single parents in this survey (N=222), 55 percent of the single mothers (N=207) and 44 percent of the single fathers (N=15), still prefer to live in their present neighborhood. Among the 190 single parents (46 percent) who would prefer to move out of their present neighborhood, the most frequently cited reason (67 percent) centered on the desire to live in a "better environment" (e.g., safer, less crowded, and more quiet).

SIZE OF PRESENT HOUSING

The present housing of single parents in this survey averaged 2.6 bedrooms. Eight percent (N=35) lived in housing with only one bedroom. Fifty-five percent (N=230), mothers and fathers alike, had fewer bedrooms than persons in the household, including 24 percent who had 2 or more fewer bedrooms than persons (see **Table 3.12**).

HOUSING SUITABILITY

Seventy-two percent of the single parents, seventy-two percent of the single mothers and seventy-four percent of the single fathers, found their current housing suitable to their family's needs. The 108 single mothers and 9 single fathers who were dissatisfied with their housing were asked to describe their housing problems. Their answers, grouped into several categories (see

Table 3.11. REASONS FOR MOVING TO OR STAYING IN PRESENT HOUSING BY SEX (MULTIPLE RESPONSES INCLUDED)

	All (N=416)		Female (N=383)	Male (N=33)
	Percent	Number	Percent	Percent
Housing was affordable	44.2	184	43.9	48.5
Liked the location				
- liked the neighborhood	(10.8)	(45)	(9.9)	(21.2)
- good location	(9.1)	(38)	(8.9)	(12.1)
- near family/friends	(6.5)	(27)	(6.8)	(3.0)
- near good school	(4.1)	(17)	(4.4)	(0.0)
Subtotal	30.5	127	30.0	36.3
Liked housing features				
- big enough	(8.2)	(34)	(8.6)	(3.0)
- had yard/privacy	(6.7)	(28)	(6.8)	(6.1)
- good condition	(5.3)	(22)	(4.7)	(12.1)
- small enough	(0.7)	(3)	(0.5)	(3.0)
Subtotal	20.9	87	20.6	24.2
Stability/security	9.6	40	9.9	6.1
Needed place to live	8.9	37	9.7	0.0
Other reasons	8.9	37	8.9	9.1

Table 3.12. NUMBER OF BEDROOMS AND BEDROOMS PER PERSON BY SEX OF PARENT

NUMBER OF BEDROOMS	ALL (N=421)		FEMALE (N=387)	MALE (N=34)
	Percent	Number	Percent	Percent
1	8.3	35	7.8	14.7
2	44.2	186	45.5	29.4
3	32.3	136	32.0	35.3
4+	15.3	64	14.7	20.6
Total	100.0	421	100.0	100.0

BEDROOMS PER PERSONS IN HOUSEHOLD				
1 or more bedrooms per person	45.4	191	44.4	55.9
1 fewer bedrooms than persons	30.6	129	30.8	29.4
2 fewer bedrooms than persons	15.7	66	16.3	8.8
3 or more fewer bedrooms than persons	8.3	35	8.5	5.9
Total	100.0	421	100.0	100.0

Note: Significance test for number of bedrooms: chi square = 4.45; df = 3; NS
 Significance test for bedrooms per person: chi square = 2.29; df = 3; NS

Table 3.13) fell most often into the categories "too small" and "housing in poor condition." Most (82 percent) of the single mothers who described their present housing as too small had fewer bedrooms than persons in their household.

Non-subsidized renters and apartment dwellers were most likely to be dissatisfied with their current housing (see **Table 3.14**).

HOUSING ALTERNATIVES

Respondents were asked if they would prefer to live in any of the housing types listed in **Table 3.15** as an alternative to their present housing. Most single parents (73 percent) would not prefer any of the listed housing alternatives. Among those who would prefer an alternative type of housing, single mothers most frequently preferred an apartment building with some common space, while single fathers most frequently preferred to share housing with a roommate.

CHILD CARE

Child care is taken broadly to be any arrangements made by parents for the regular care of their children age 12 and younger -- licensed and unregulated, paid care and free care, in-home and out. The types of child care include in-home care by relatives and non-relatives, care provided in the home of a relative or non-relative, group care, licensed family home care and preschool. Primary school activities during school hours are excluded.

WHO USED CHILD CARE?

Among the 325 single parents in this study who have at least one child age 12 or younger, 47 percent (N=153) used child care on a regular basis. Single fathers appeared more likely than single mothers to use child care (68 percent vs. 46 percent). A later chapter on single fathers using data from a supplemental sample will examine the use of child care by single fathers in more detail. The following examination will deal with single mothers only.

Among the 140 single mothers who reported using child care on a regular basis, 52 percent worked full-time; 17 percent worked part-time; 28 percent were not working or looking for work (i.e., out of the labor force); and 3 percent were unemployed. Forty-five percent of this group of single mothers were AFDC recipients (see **Table 3.16**).

PROBLEMS WITH PRESENT HOUSING BY SEX OF PARENT^a
 Table 3.13. (MULTIPLE RESPONSES INCLUDED)

	Females	Males
	(N=108)	(N=9)
	Percent	Percent
Housing too small	63.0	44.4
Poor condition	31.5	22.2
No play area/not a house	6.5	22.2
Too large	5.6	11.1
No privacy	4.6	11.1
Bad location	4.6	11.1
Bad neighborhood	6.5	0.0
Too expensive	3.7	0.0

^a Includes only those who reported that housing was not suitable to their family's housing needs

Table 3.14. SINGLE MOTHERS: HOUSING SUITABILITY BY HOUSING TENURE AND TYPE

	Percent of Each Group Reporting Housing as Not Suitable	Number
<u>HOUSING TENURE</u>		
Non-subsidized renters	40.3	77
Subsidized renters	22.1	19
Owners	11.8	13
<u>HOUSING TYPE</u>		
Apartment	39.3	42
Duplex and other multi-family	31.8	41
Mobile home	23.1	3
Single family home	16.7	23

Note: Significance test for housing tenure: chi square = 30.03; df = 2; p < .0001
 Significance test for housing type: chi square = 16.52; df = 3; p < .001

Table 3.15. HOUSING ALTERNATIVES BY SEX (MULTIPLE RESPONSES INCLUDED)

	Percent Who Would Prefer Each as An Alternative to Present Housing		
	All	Female	Male
	(N=421)	(N=387)	(N=34)
	Percent	Percent	Percent
Living in apartment building with common spaces ^a	11.4	11.6	8.8
Sharing a house with a roommate	10.5	9.8	17.6
Sharing a house with another single parent family	9.0	8.5	14.7
Sharing a house with an elderly home owner	7.4	8.0	0.0
Living in communal housing ^b	3.6	3.4	5.9
None of the above	73.2	73.6	67.6

^a The building was described as having separate living areas for every family, but with indoor and outdoor play areas for children, a day care center, and a group kitchen so that cooking and cleaning tasks could be shared.

^b This option was described as a house where household maintenance and child-rearing were a group responsibility.

SINGLE MOTHERS^a: USE OF CHILD CARE BY
 Table 3.16. EMPLOYMENT STATUS AND AFDC STATUS

<u>EMPLOYMENT STATUS</u>	<u>USED CHILD CARE^b</u>
	<u>(N=139)</u> <u>Percent</u>
Full-time	51.8
Part-time	17.3
Unemployed	2.9
Out of labor force	28.1
Total	100.0

<u>AFDC STATUS</u>	<u>(N=140)</u> <u>Percent</u>
Yes	45.0
No	55.0
Total	100.0

^a Includes parents with children under age 13 only

^b Used child care or sitter on a regular basis

PRIMARY TYPES OF CHILD CARE

The primary types of child care that single mothers arranged for their children ages 12 or younger are shown in **Table 3.17**. The 189 children in child care were divided among a variety of arrangements. The most frequently used arrangement was being cared for at home by a relative (29 percent). The relatives providing the child care were most frequently older siblings (55 percent), followed by grandparents (29 percent) and aunts, uncles, or cousins (16 percent). Being cared for by an unrelated individual either at that person's home (16 percent) or at the child's own home (12 percent) were the next most frequently used types of child care. Going to a relative's home (71 percent grandparents and 29 percent aunts, uncles, or cousins) or to a licensed family home were each used by 11 percent of the children in child care. Preschool and group care centers were each used on a regular basis by 10 percent of the 189 children.

Primary Types of Child Care for Various Age Groups

Table 3.17 also shows the types of child care used for children of various ages. Children ages 2 or younger tended most frequently to be at home with a relative or a non-relative (44 percent). They also appeared more likely than older children to be cared for at the home of a relative or in licensed family homes.

Those ages 3 to 5 tended to be about equally cared for at home (31 percent) or in preschool (29 percent). They also appeared more likely than both younger and older children to be cared for in group care centers (see **Table 3.17**).

A closer examination of this age group found that children ages 3 to 5 whose mothers were employed part-time (N=17) were most frequently cared for at home (53 percent), followed by preschool (24 percent); those whose mothers were employed full-time (N=18) were most frequently cared for in a relative's or non-relative's home (33 percent) or in group care centers (28 percent); while those whose mothers were out of the labor force (N=28) were most frequently in preschool (50 percent) or at home (22 percent). See **Table 3.18**.

Children 6 to 12 tended most frequently to be cared for in their own homes, but appeared more likely than younger children to be cared for at the home of a non-relative (see **Table 3.17**). This latter arrangement appeared more likely for those whose mothers worked full-time.

Table 3.17. SINGLE MOTHERS: PRIMARY CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS FOR CHILDREN AGES 12 OR YOUNGER BY AGES OF CHILDREN

	ALL		AGES OF CHILDREN			
	Percent of Children	Number	0-2	3-5	6-9	10-12
			(N=32) Percent	(N=65) Percent	(N=71) Percent	(N=21) Percent
Care in child's home with relative	28.6	54	31.3	20.0	31.0	42.9
Care in non-relative's home	15.9	30	12.5	6.2	25.4	19.0
Care in child's home with non-relative	11.6	22	12.5	10.8	12.7	9.5
Care in relative's home	11.1	21	18.8	9.2	9.9	9.5
Licensed family home	11.1	21	18.8	9.2	11.3	4.8
Preschool	10.1	19	0.0	29.2	0.0	0.0
Group care center	9.5	18	6.3	15.4	5.6	9.5
Other arrangements	2.1	4	0.0	0.0	4.2	4.8
Total	100.0	189	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

SINGLE MOTHERS: PRIMARY CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS FOR CHILDREN AGES 3 TO 5 BY
 Table 3.18. EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF MOTHER

	EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF MOTHER		
	Full-time	Part-time	Out of Labor Force
	(N=18) Percent	(N=17) Percent	(N=28) Percent
<u>PRIMARY CHILD CARE FOR CHILDREN AGES 3 TO 5</u>			
Care in child's home with relative	22.2	23.5	17.9
Care in non-relative's home	16.7	0.0	3.6
Care in child's home with non-relative	0.0	29.4	3.6
Care in relative's home	16.7	11.8	3.6
Licensed family home	16.7	0.0	10.7
Preschool	0.0	23.5	50.0
Group care center	27.8	11.8	10.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

For perspective, **Table 3.19** lists the proportions of three groups of mothers who use various child care arrangements on a regular basis -- single mothers from this survey, and married mothers (husband present) and single mothers from a 1982 Current Population Survey of the entire United States. The data are limited to employed mothers ages 18 to 44 whose youngest child is age 4 or younger.

Demographic and Family Characteristics of Child Care Users

The following analysis examines the primary types of child care arrangements by various characteristics of the 140 single mothers whose children were in child care. The primary types of child care were grouped and compared three different ways: in-home child care vs. care outside the parent's home, child care provided by relatives vs. child care provided by unrelated providers, and regulated vs. unregulated care.

Forty percent of the children in child care were in arrangements in their own homes. Single mothers who arranged for in-home child care appeared to be older, to have larger families (three or more children), and to have lower educational levels than those who used child care away from their own homes. Widows were more likely than other single mothers to use in-home child care. The location of child care, otherwise, was not related to the age of the mother's youngest child, race, employment status, AFDC status, income, or living arrangement (presence or absence of another adult in the household).

Forty percent of the children in child care were cared for by relatives: older siblings (40 percent); grandparents (40 percent); and aunts, uncles, or cousins (20 percent). Users of relatives tended to have lower educational levels and appeared to have more children and to be more likely to have another adult in their household than did users of unrelated child care providers. Widows were more likely and those ages 25 to 34 appeared less likely than other single mothers to use relatives for child care.

Two-thirds of the children in child care (68 percent) were in unregulated arrangements. Single mothers who used unregulated child care tended to be older (age 35 or older) and appeared to have older children (age 6 or older) than those who used regulated child care. Widows appeared the most likely and never married single mothers the least likely to use unregulated child care.

PRIMARY CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS USED BY EMPLOYED MOTHERS FOR YOUNGEST CHILD AGE
Table 3.19. 4 AND YOUNGER: 1984^a AND 1982^b

	Single Mothers	Married Mothers, Husband Present	Other Mothers ^c
	1984 ^a	1982 ^b	1982 ^b
	(N=42)	(N=3,888,000)	(N=927,000)
Type of Arrangement	Percent	Percent	Percent
Care in child's home with relative	24	27	24
Care in child's home with non-relative	14	5	9
Care in relative's home	14	19	20
Care in other private home ^d	33	24	21
Group care center/preschool	14	14	22
Mother cares for child while working	0	11	4
Total	100	100	100

^a Single mothers ages 18 to 44 and employed when surveyed

^b Based on data from a 1982 Current Population Survey of U.S. working women 18 to 44 years old (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1983D).

^c Includes married women with husband absent (including separated) and widowed, divorced and never married women

^d Includes care in non-relative's home and licensed family day care for this survey. Licensed family day care is not specified in census data

PAYMENT FOR CHILD CARE

Overall, 46 percent of the children in child care were being cared for without charge to their mothers. Among the widely used arrangements, in-home care with a relative and preschool were the types of arrangements that single mothers used most frequently without charge (see **Table 3.20**). Users of relatives were significantly more likely than those using unrelated care providers to receive the child care without charge (65 percent vs. 28 percent). In-home child care appeared more likely than child care provided outside the home to be provided free of charge to the mother (57 percent vs. 34 percent). Use of regulated or unregulated child care, however, was not associated with the cost of the care to the mother.

USE OF SUPPLEMENTAL CHILD CARE

More than half (54 percent) of the single mothers who had regular primary child care arrangements for their children under age 13 also had other child care arrangements that they could use whenever necessary. **Table 3.21** lists the supplemental types of child care arranged by single mothers for their children. The most frequently used supplemental types of care involved the child being cared for at the home of a relative (16 percent) and a relative caring for the child at the child's home (13 percent). Grandparents were the chief care providers in both locations (71 percent), followed by other relatives, e.g., aunts, uncles, cousins (20 percent), and older siblings (9 percent).

ADEQUACY OF CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS

A large majority (84 percent) of single mothers expressed satisfaction with their child care arrangements. Moreover, among the 16 percent of single mothers (N=20) who reported having problems with their child care arrangements, half described their problems as being "small" problems.

The problems single mothers were having with their present child care arrangements were grouped into the following categories: "wanted cheaper care" (47 percent), "wanted better care" (32 percent), "wanted more reliable care" (20 percent), "wanted better located care" (21 percent), and "wanted extended hours" (11 percent).

Single mothers (ages 25 or older) with at least some college education (32 percent) were significantly more likely than those with high school only educations (6 percent) or less than a high school education (0 percent) to report having problems with their present child care arrangements. Those who

SINGLE MOTHERS: PRIMARY CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS FOR CHILDREN AGES 12 OR YOUNGER BY WHETHER
 Table 3.20. MOTHER PAYS FOR CHILD CARE

	Payment by Mother for Child Care?			Total
	Number	Yes	No	
Care in child's home with relative	51	23.5	76.5	100.0
Care in non-relative's home	30	93.3	6.7	100.0
Care in child's home with non-relative	20	75.0	25.0	100.0
Care in relative's home	20	50.0	50.0	100.0
Licensed family home	18	72.2	27.8	100.0
Group care center	16	62.5	37.5	100.0
Preschool	10	20.0	80.0	100.0
Other arrangements	3	0.0	100.0	100.0

Note: 21 cases missing

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SINGLE MOTHERS: SUPPLEMENTAL CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS FOR CHILDREN
 Table 3.21. AGES 12 OR YOUNGER (MULTIPLE RESPONSES INCLUDED)

	<u>Percent of 189 Children</u>	<u>Number</u>
Care in relative's home	15.9	30
Care in child's home with relative	13.2	25
Care in child's home with non-relative	10.6	20
Care in non-relative's home	10.1	19
Preschool	4.3	8
Care in other parent's home	2.1	4
Licensed family home	1.1	2
Primary school activities	0.5	1
Latch Key program	0.5	1

paid for child care, moreover, appeared more likely than those whose child care was free to report having problems (22 percent vs. 4 percent). Those with children in preschools (33 percent) were the most likely to report having problems, while those whose children stayed home with relatives were the least likely to report having problems (see **Table 3.22**). In general, single mothers arranging for care in their own homes rather than away from their own homes, users of relatives rather than unrelated providers and users of unregulated care rather than regulated care appeared to be having fewer problems with their child care arrangements.

REASONS FOR NOT USING CHILD CARE

Among the 306 single mothers with children ages 12 or younger, 54 percent (N=166) did not use child care on a regular basis. Ninety-three of these single mothers were out of the labor force and reported not using child care because, for the most part, they were "at home with their children." (To repeat, **Table 2.22** in the previous chapter showed that "not being able to afford day care" was among the most frequently cited reasons for being out of the labor force among AFDC mothers with preschool children.) The other 73 single mothers, who were in the labor force, cited various and multiple reasons for not using child care on a regular basis.⁸ More than half (55 percent) reported that they "were home when their children were home." Forty percent believed that their "children were old enough to care for themselves." Of these 28 children viewed as "old enough to care for themselves," two were age 8; one was 9; seven were 10; eight were 11; and ten were 12. Eight percent "could not afford" child care; 5 percent found child care "unreliable;" and 3 percent "did not trust" child care.

CHILD CARE INFORMATION THAT WOULD BE HELPFUL

Twenty-seven percent (N=84) of the single mothers with children ages 12 or younger believed that more information about day care services would be helpful to them. The types of information that they would like, grouped into several categories, are listed in **Table 3.23**. Information about "types of services and

⁸ Respondents not using "day care or a sitter" on a regular basis were asked, "Why not?" Their multiple responses were grouped into several categories (N=66).

Table 3.22. SINGLE MOTHERS: PERCENT REPORTING PROBLEMS WITH CHILD CARE BY TYPES OF PRIMARY ARRANGEMENTS

	<u>Number of Single Mothers Using Arrangement</u>	<u>Percent of Single Mothers Expressing Problem with Arrangement</u>
Preschool	12	33.3
Care in non-relative's home	30	23.3
Group care center	18	22.2
Licensed family home	18	16.7
Care in relative's home	20	15.0
Care in child's home with non-relative	22	13.6
-179- Care in child's home with relative	48	4.2
Other arrangements	4	50.0
Total of all arrangements	127	15.7

Table 3.23. SINGLE MOTHERS: INFORMATION ABOUT CHILD CARE SERVICES THAT WOULD BE HELPFUL (N=83)^a

	<u>Percent Who Want Type of Information</u>
Locations	42.2
Costs	39.8
Types of services child care provides	27.7
Special types of child care programs	16.9
Eligibility requirements to receive subsidy	15.7
Times	6.0
Child care during night hours	3.6
Child care for children with special needs	3.6
Availability	2.4

^a Includes only parents with children age 12 or younger who believe information about child care would be helpful

programs," "locations," and the "cost of child care" were the most desired types of information.

USE OF BABY-SITTERS

For our purposes here, babysitting is considered to be the use of someone older than age 12 who serves as a caretaker for children age 12 or younger while their parents are away from home for a short while. The parent's absence could be due to various reasons including their own enjoyment, errands, or emergencies. Absence due to work or school obligations are excluded from this analysis, however.

Among the 325 single parents in this survey who have at least one child age 12 or younger, 84 percent (N=272), including 83 percent of the single mothers (N=254) and 95 percent of the single fathers (N=18), used baby-sitters when they were away from home for a short while. Eight percent (N=25) of the single parents reported that they did not use baby-sitters because when they left home they took their children with them. The remaining 28 single parents with at least one child age 12 or younger (9 percent of the single mothers and 11 percent of the single fathers) reported that their children were old enough to stay at home without a sitter. The oldest child at home for 14 of these 28 parents was age 12; 4 stayed home alone, and 8 baby-sat for younger siblings. Seven of the oldest children at home were age 11; 4 stayed home alone, and 3 cared for younger siblings. Four were age 10; 2 stayed home alone, and 2 cared for younger siblings. Two were age 9; one stayed home alone, and the other sat for an infant sibling. One child, finally, who stayed home alone was age 7.

Table 3.24 lists the persons single parents usually used to watch their children ages 12 or younger. The most frequently used sitters were grandmothers (33 percent); aunts, uncles or other relatives (31 percent); siblings ages 13 or older (20 percent); hired baby-sitters (19 percent), and single friends (14 percent). Grandfathers (7 percent), the child's other parent (7 percent), married friends (6 percent), other grandparents (3 percent), and neighbors (2 percent) were less commonly used as babysitters.

Respondents were also asked, "Who took care of your children the last time you were sick or had an emergency?" Among the 325 single parents with at least one child age 12 or younger, 15 percent reported not needing to arrange for someone to care for their children, including 12 percent who had not been sick or had not had an emergency and 3 percent who were still able to care for their children on their own while being sick or during an emergency. Only one

Table 3.24. TYPE OF BABY-SITTER^a UNDER EMERGENCY AND NON-EMERGENCY CIRCUMSTANCES BY SEX OF PARENT (MULTIPLE RESPONSES INCLUDED)

	NON-EMERGENCY SITTERS ^b				EMERGENCY SITTERS ^c			
	ALL		FEMALE	MALE	ALL		FEMALE	MALE
	(N=272)		(N=254)	(N=18)	(N=272)		(N=258)	(N=14)
	Percent	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent	Number	Percent	Percent
Child's grandmother	33.1	90	33.9	22.2	37.1	101	37.6	28.6
Child's other relatives (aunts, uncles, cousins)	31.3	85	31.5	27.8	24.3	66	24.4	21.4
Child's older siblings (ages 13+)	20.2	55	20.9	11.1	7.4	20	7.4	7.1
Hired sitter	19.1	52	18.9	22.2	4.4	12	3.9	14.3
Parent's single friends	14.3	39	14.6	11.1	11.4	31	12.0	0.0
Child's grandfather	7.4	20	7.5	5.6	5.5	15	5.8	0.0
Child's other parent	6.6	18	6.3	11.1	7.4	20	6.6	21.4
Parent's married friends	5.5	15	4.7	16.7	5.5	15	5.4	7.1
Child's other grandparents	2.6	7	2.4	5.6	2.6	7	2.3	7.1
Neighbor	1.5	5	1.6	5.6	1.1	3	1.2	0.0
Mother's boyfriend	0.0	0	0.0	0.0	1.5	4	1.6	0.0

^a Includes only those who used baby-sitter for children age 12 and younger

^b Respondents read from a list of responses and were asked: "Who usually takes care of your child(ren) when you go out for a while or do something for your own enjoyment?"

^c Respondents read from the list of responses and were asked: "Who took care of your child(ren) the last time you were sick or had an emergency?"

percent reported that the last time they were sick or had an emergency their children cared for themselves. **Table 3.24** lists the persons used by the 84 percent (N=282) who arranged for help the last time they were sick or had an emergency. Grandmothers (37 percent) and other relatives (24 percent) again top the list. Older siblings (7 percent) and hired sitters (4 percent) were used less frequently than they were used under non-emergency circumstances.

There were no significant differences between the proportions of single mothers and single fathers who used the various types of sitters under either emergency or non-emergency circumstances. It appears that single fathers had a greater tendency than single mothers to use their child's other parent as a baby-sitter, especially as emergency baby-sitters.

HOUSEHOLD NECESSITIES

Respondents were asked if during the past year they or their children had to go without any of the following necessities because of lack of money: adequate food, essential furniture (beds, chairs, tables), essential clothing, medical care (other than routine check-ups), dental care (other than routine check-ups), adequate heat, a telephone, or some other item that they considered essential (responses included recreation, regular transportation, and electricity). This section identifies what necessities single parents were lacking in the past year and examines the characteristics of those who went without various necessities. It then identifies what necessities were sought and received last year and what sources provided the help. The section concludes by examining the obstacles single parents faced to getting the necessities that they lacked.

GOING WITHOUT NECESSITIES

Fifty-four percent of single parents (N=229), including 57 percent of the single mothers (N=221) and 24 percent of the single fathers (N=8), reported not having sufficient money in the past year to provide one or more household necessities. **Table 3.25** lists the proportions of single mothers and single fathers who went without various necessities before seeking help. Twenty-eight percent of single mothers and 15 percent of single fathers went without essential clothing. Twenty-six percent of single mothers went without adequate food, significantly more than the 3 percent of single fathers. Twenty percent of single mothers and 9 percent of single fathers went without essential

Table 3.25. GOING WITHOUT HOUSEHOLD NECESSITIES BEFORE AND AFTER SEEKING HELP BY SEX OF PARENT

	PERCENT WHO REPORTED GOING WITHOUT EACH ITEM DURING PAST YEAR BECAUSE OF LACK OF MONEY							
	BEFORE SEEKING HELP				AFTER SEEKING HELP			
	All		Female	Male	All		Female	Male
	(N=421)		(N=387)	(N=34)	(N=421)		(N=387)	(N=34)
	Percent	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent	Number	Percent	Percent
Essential clothes	26.8	113	27.9	14.7	20.4	86	21.2	11.8
Adequate food/diet	24.5	103	<u>26.4</u>	<u>2.9</u>	9.0	38	9.8	0.0
Essential furniture (beds, tables, chairs)	19.2	81	20.2	8.8	16.6	70	17.8	2.9
Dental care (other than routine check-ups)	15.0	63	15.5	8.8	12.8	54	13.2	8.8
Adequate heat	14.5	61	15.5	2.9	8.3	35	8.8	2.9
Telephone	13.5	57	14.5	2.9	12.6	53	13.4	2.9
Medical care (other than routine check-ups)	7.8	33	8.0	5.9	6.4	27	6.7	2.9
Other	4.3	18	4.4	2.9	3.8	16	3.9	2.9
Went without one or more necessities	54.4	229	<u>57.1</u>	<u>23.5</u>	29.5	124	30.7	14.7

Note: Underlined percentages indicate significant differences at the .01 level.

furniture. Smaller proportions of single mothers went without dental care (16 percent), adequate heat (16 percent), telephones (15 percent), and medical care (8 percent). Of these latter necessities, only the lack of dental care (9 percent) and the lack of medical care (6 percent) were reported as a problem by more than one single father.

For perspective, a comparable question in a recent, general survey of households in the Twin Cities seven county area found that 21 percent of all family households with children and 63 percent of low-income family households with children in Ramsey County went without one or more necessities in the past year because of lack of money (Minnesota Center for Social Research, 1985). **Table 3.26** lists the proportions of families with children from this survey and the Twin City Area Surveys who went without various necessities in the past year before seeking help.

In this survey, single mothers who were unemployed or out of the labor force, AFDC recipients, and those with annual incomes of less than \$14,000 were significantly more likely than other single mothers to report going without essential clothes (see **Table 3.27**). Single mothers who were employed part-time, unemployed, or who were out of the labor force; AFDC recipients; and those with annual incomes of less than \$14,000 were more likely than other single mothers to report going without adequate food. Single mothers who were out of the labor force, AFDC recipients, and those with annual incomes of less than \$14,000 were significantly more likely to report going without essential furniture. Single mothers in the labor force (i.e., employed full-time, part-time, or unemployed) and those not receiving AFDC were significantly more likely to report going without dental care (see **Table 3.27**). Those who were out of the labor force, those receiving AFDC, and those with annual incomes of less than \$8,000 were significantly more likely than other single mothers to report going without telephones. Going without medical care or heat were not significantly related to the employment status, AFDC status, or income of single mothers.

Table 3.27 also shows that those who were unemployed or out of the labor force, those receiving AFDC, and those with annual incomes of less than \$14,000 were significantly more likely than other single mothers to have gone without at least one necessity in the past year.

Table 3.26. GOING WITHOUT NECESSITIES IN RAMSEY COUNTY

	PERCENT WHO REPORTED GOING WITHOUT EACH ITEM DURING PAST YEAR BECAUSE OF LACK OF MONEY		
	Single Parent Families ^a	All Families With Children ^b	Low-Income Families With Children ^b
	(N=421) Percent	(N=87) Percent	(N=80) Percent
Essential clothes	26.3	4.0	23.3
Adequate food	24.5	3.4	21.8
Essential furniture	19.2	1.7	21.1
Dental care ^c	15.0	11.4	24.2
Adequate heat	14.5	5.7	24.1
Telephone	13.5	3.4	13.6
Medical care ^c	7.8	2.3	15.0
Other	4.3	4.0	5.4
One or more	54.4	20.7	63.1

^a Source: Table 3.25 this survey

^b Source: Minnesota Center for Social Research, 1985

^c The questions differed somewhat on these items. The Single Parent Family Study referred to "other than routine check-ups" for dental and medical care, while the Twin City Area Surveys referred to "needed" dental and medical care.

Table 3.27. SINGLE MOTHERS: PERCENTAGES WHO REPORTED GOING WITHOUT VARIOUS NECESSITIES BY ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

	EMPLOYMENT STATUS				AFDC STATUS		INCOME		
	Full-time	Part-time	Unemployed	Out of Labor Force	Yes	No	< \$8000	\$8000-14,000	\$14,000+
	(N=156)	(N=48)	(N=34)	(N=146)	(N=203)	(N=184)	(N=190)	(N=83)	(N=110)
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Clothes	<u>13.5</u>	<u>20.8</u>	<u>44.1</u>	<u>41.8</u>	<u>40.9</u>	<u>13.6</u>	<u>41.1</u>	<u>27.7</u>	<u>6.4</u>
Food	<u>13.5</u>	<u>29.2</u>	<u>32.4</u>	<u>38.4</u>	<u>37.9</u>	<u>13.6</u>	<u>34.7</u>	<u>31.3</u>	<u>9.1</u>
Furniture	<u>9.0</u>	<u>14.6</u>	<u>20.6</u>	<u>34.2</u>	<u>30.0</u>	<u>9.2</u>	<u>25.8</u>	<u>27.7</u>	<u>5.5</u>
Dental care	<u>21.2</u>	<u>16.7</u>	<u>20.6</u>	<u>6.8</u>	<u>7.4</u>	<u>24.5</u>	11.6	16.9	20.9
Adequate heat	10.3	16.7	32.4	17.1	19.7	10.9	20.0	12.0	10.9
Telephone	<u>6.4</u>	<u>10.4</u>	<u>8.8</u>	<u>26.0</u>	<u>21.2</u>	<u>7.1</u>	<u>23.2</u>	<u>7.2</u>	<u>5.5</u>
Medical care	9.6	8.3	14.7	4.1	5.4	10.9	5.8	13.3	7.3
Going without one or more necessities	<u>40.4</u>	<u>52.1</u>	<u>79.4</u>	<u>71.2</u>	<u>70.0</u>	<u>42.9</u>	<u>70.5</u>	<u>56.6</u>	<u>35.5</u>

Note: Underlined percentages indicate significant differences at the .01 level

SEEKING HELP FOR NECESSITIES

Among the 229 single parents who reported going without at least one necessity in the past year because of lack of money, 58 percent (N=133) sought help for one or more necessities during the past year. This group of single parents who sought help for necessities included 129 single mothers and 4 single fathers.

Among the 133 single parents who sought help for one or more necessities in the past year, 78 (59 percent) sought help for food, 41 (31 percent) sought help for clothes, 40 (30 percent) for heat, 29 (22 percent) for furniture, 17 (13 percent) for dental care, 13 (10 percent) for medical care, 8 (6 percent) for telephones, and 5 (4 percent) for other necessities.

Table 3.28 shows where or from whom single parents sought help and how many single parents obtained help from each source. Single parents most frequently sought help for one or more necessities from a human service agency or organization (e.g., Ramsey Action Program, New Beginning Center) from a neighborhood church or community center (e.g., Dayton's Bluff foodshelf, Mt. Airy Community Center) or from Ramsey County Community Human Services (i.e., AFDC). Seventy-nine percent of the single parents (N=105) who sought help obtained the help they needed. It appears that seeking help for necessities from informal sources of help such as churches or community centers, family, or friends rather than from formal organizations (e.g., AFDC or human service agencies) was more likely to yield the required help.

After the 133 of the 229 single parents who were lacking necessities sought help, the proportion of single parents going without at least one necessity declined from 54 percent to 30 percent. Going without adequate food dropped from 25 percent to 9 percent. Going without adequate heat dropped from 15 percent to 8 percent. In contrast, the proportions going without essential clothes, essential furniture, dental care, telephones, and medical care showed only small reductions (see **Table 3.25**).

Obstacles to Obtaining Necessities

Among the 229 single parents who went without one or more household necessities in the past year, 28 (12 percent) sought help but were still unable to obtain the necessity that they lacked. The most frequently cited obstacles for not getting the help they needed were "being turned down," "help not being available," and "income being too high to qualify for assistance" (see **Table 3.29**).

Table 3.28. SINGLE PARENTS: WHERE SOUGHT AND RECEIVED HELP FOR HOUSEHOLD NECESSITIES IN PAST YEAR^a

	WHERE SOUGHT HELP		THOSE RECEIVING HELP	
	(N=133)		(N=105)	
	Number	Percent of 133	Number	Percent of Those Seeking Help From Each Source
Human Service Agency	47	35.3	36	76.6
AFDC	41	30.8	20	48.8
Church/Community Center	40	30.1	38	95.0
Family	22	16.5	20	90.1
Friends	10	7.5	10	100.0
Child's other parent	4	3.0	3	75.0
Other	17	12.8	12	70.6

^a Includes seeking help for food, clothes, furniture, medical care, dental care, heat, telephones and other necessities

Table 3.29. SINGLE PARENTS: OBSTACLES TO GETTING HELP WITH HOUSEHOLD NECESSITIES

	Percent of Each Group Reporting Each Obstacle (Includes Multiple Responses)	
	Sought help but Did not get it	Did not seek help
	(N=23)	(N=96)
	Percent	Percent
Did not know where to go for help	3.6	57.3
Got turned down	53.6	7.3
Help needed not available	53.6	33.3
Income too high to qualify for help	46.4	36.5
Wants to manage without help	3.6	29.2
Problems with welfare staff	25.0	5.2
Cannot afford the cost of services	10.7	13.5
Do not understand eligibility requirements	3.6	11.5
Embarrassed to seek help	0.0	9.4
Transportation problems	0.0	9.4
No one can help with the problem	0.0	7.3
Language difficulties	0.0	2.1
Inconvenient hours	0.0	2.1
Other reasons	17.9	13.5

Forty-two percent (N=96) of the single parents did not seek any help for the necessities that they lacked. The most frequently cited reasons for not seeking help were "not knowing where to go for help," "believing that their income was too high to qualify for help," "believing that the help they needed was not available," and "believing that it was important to handle the problem themselves" (see **Table 3.29**).

TRANSPORTATION

TYPES OF TRANSPORTATION USED MOST OFTEN

Table 3.30 shows the proportions of single parents who used various types of transportation. About half of the single mothers (52 percent) contrasted with nearly all of the single fathers (94 percent) most frequently used their own cars for transportation. More than a quarter (27 percent) of the single mothers most often used public transportation (MTC). Smaller proportions of single mothers most often walked (8 percent); rode with their parents, other relatives, or friends (7 percent); borrowed a car (4 percent), or used some other mode of transportation (e.g., taxi, school bus, or car pool).

TRANSPORTATION PROBLEMS

Frequency of Problems

Respondents were asked how often they and their children were unable to get where they wanted to go because of transportation difficulties: always/usually, sometimes, rarely or never. A third of the single mothers reported having transportation difficulties for themselves at least sometimes, including 4 percent who were usually or always unable to get where they wanted to go. Similar percentages of single mothers reported having difficulties with their children's transportation (see **Table 3.31**). In contrast, only 6 percent (N=2) of the single fathers reported having transportation problems for themselves at least sometimes and 12 percent reported that their children sometimes had transportation difficulties.

Characteristics of Single Parents Having Transportation Problems

Overall, thirty-seven percent of the single parents (N=156), including 39 percent (N=151) of the single mothers and 15 percent (N=5) of the single fathers, reported that they or their children were "always/usually" or "sometimes" unable to get where they wanted to go because of transportation

Table 3.30. PRIMARY TRANSPORTATION^a BY SEX

	ALL		FEMALE	MALE
	Percent	Number	(N=387)	(N=34)
Own car	55.3	233	51.9	94.1
City bus/MTC	24.9	105	27.1	0.0
Walking	6.9	29	7.5	0.0
Ride with someone	6.7	28	6.7	5.9
Borrow car	3.8	16	4.1	0.0
Other (school bus, taxi, car pool)	2.4	10	2.6	0.0
Total	100.0	421	100.0	100.0

^a Primary transportation is the type reported to be used most often.

Table 3.31. FREQUENCY OF TRANSPORTATION DIFFICULTIES^a FOR SELF AND CHILDREN BY SEX OF PARENT

	ALL				FEMALES		MALES	
	Self		Children		Self	Children	Self	Children
					(N=386)	(N=383)	(N=34)	(N=33)
	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Always/usually	3.8	16	2.6	11	3.9	2.9	2.9	0.0
Sometimes	27.4	115	27.4	114	29.5	28.7	2.9	12.1
Rarely	42.9	180	45.7	190	43.0	44.9	41.2	54.5
Never	26.0	109	24.3	101	23.6	23.5	52.9	33.3
Total	100.0	420	100.0	416	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

^a Respondents read from a list of responses and were asked: "How often are you unable to get where you want to go because of transportation difficulties? How about your children?"

Note: Significance test for self (male vs. female): chi square = 18.55; df = 3; p < .001

Significance test for children (male vs. female): chi square = 5.83; df = 3; NS

difficulties. Single mothers who were out of the labor force or unemployed, AFDC recipients, and those with annual incomes of less than \$8,000 were more likely than other single mothers to be having transportation difficulties (see **Table 3.32**). Those without their own cars were also more likely to report having transportation problems.

Types of Transportation Problems

Single parents who reported that they or their children "always/usually" or "sometimes" had transportation difficulties were asked to describe their transportation problems. **Table 3.33** lists the transportation problems reported by the 156 single parents who were having transportation difficulties. The most frequently cited problems were "not being able to afford gas or bus fare," "poor bus connections or lack of bus service when needed," "trouble with a car that did not run properly," "not being able to always get a ride from someone else when needed," and "the lack of a car."

Activities That Cannot Do Because of Transportation Problems

Table 3.34 lists the kinds of activities single parents and their children were unable to do because of lack of transportation. Fifteen percent (N=64) of the single parents reported that they or their children were unable to participate in recreational activities because of lack of transportation. Other activities that single parents reported being unable to do because of transportation difficulties included "grocery shopping" (7 percent), "going to the doctor" (6 percent), and "going to work" (4 percent). Seven percent of the single parents lacking transportation (N=28) reported that no "important" activities were missed because of transportation problems.

HELP WITH TRANSPORTATION

Seventy-eight percent of the 156 single parents who reported having transportation difficulties (N=121), including 78 percent of the single mothers and 60 percent of the single fathers, reported that they received help with their transportation problems. They were helped most often by friends (65 percent), parents (36 percent), or other relatives (32 percent). Single parents who received help most frequently were given rides (81 percent). Less frequently, single parents "borrowed a car" (7 percent), "had their cars repaired" (5 percent), or "borrowed money" (3 percent).

Table 3.32. SINGLE MOTHERS: TRANSPORTATION DIFFICULTIES BY ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

	ALL		EMPLOYMENT STATUS				AFDC STATUS		ANNUAL INCOME		
			Full-time	Part-time	Unemployed	Out of Labor Force	Yes	No	< \$8,000	\$8,000-\$14,000	\$14,000+
	(N=386)		(N=156)	(N=47)	(N=34)	(N=146)	(N=203)	(N=183)	(N=190)	(N=82)	(N=110)
	Percent	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
TRANSPORTATION DIFFICULTIES ^a											
Yes	39.1	151	<u>23.7</u>	<u>31.9</u>	<u>50.0</u>	<u>55.5</u>	<u>55.2</u>	<u>21.3</u>	<u>53.7</u>	<u>31.7</u>	<u>19.1</u>
No	60.9	235	<u>76.3</u>	<u>68.1</u>	<u>50.0</u>	<u>44.5</u>	<u>44.7</u>	<u>78.7</u>	<u>46.3</u>	<u>68.3</u>	<u>80.9</u>
Total	100.0	386	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

^a Respondents were asked, "How often are you or your children unable to get where you want to go because of transportation difficulties?" Responses of "always/usually" and "sometimes" were recoded as "yes." Responses of "rarely" and "never" were recoded as "no."

Note: Underlined percentages indicate significant difference at the .01 level.

Note: Significance test for employment status: chi square = 34.65; df = 3; p < .0001

Significance test for AFDC status: corrected chi square = 44.92; df = 1; p < .0001

Significance test for income status: chi square = 37.38; df = 2; p < .0001

PERCENTAGES HAVING VARIOUS TYPES OF TRANSPORTATION PROBLEMS
 Table 3.33. (MULTIPLE RESPONSES INCLUDED)

<u>TYPES OF TRANSPORTATION PROBLEMS</u>	<u>Percentages Reporting^d</u> (N=156)
Can't afford transportation	28.8
Problems with buses (poor connections, not available when needed)	25.0
Car trouble	19.9
Can't always get a ride	19.9
Don't have a car	16.7
Inclement weather	7.1
Poor health	2.6
Other	9.6

^a Percentages include responses for mothers or for their children who "always/usually" or "sometimes" were unable to get where they wanted to go because of transportation difficulties.

PERCENTAGES LACKING VARIOUS ACTIVITIES BECAUSE OF
Table 3.34. TRANSPORTATION PROBLEMS (MULTIPLE RESPONSES INCLUDED)

<u>ACTIVITIES UNABLE TO DO BECAUSE OF TRANSPORTATION PROBLEMS</u>	<u>Percentages Reporting^a</u> (N=418)
Recreation	15.2
Grocery shopping	7.1
Going to the doctor	5.9
Going to work	4.3
Going to school	2.6
Going to church	1.4
After school activities	1.4
Other (shopping, general errands, visiting)	8.6

^a Respondents were asked: "What important activities or things (including working), if any, are you or your children unable to do because you lack transportation?" The percentages reported refer to activities that the parents themselves or their children were unable to do "always/usually" or "sometimes" because of transportation difficulties.

LEGAL PROBLEMS

Twenty percent (N=85) of the single parents, 76 single mothers (20 percent) and 9 single fathers (27 percent), reported having legal problems. **Table 3.35** lists the types of legal problems reported by single mothers and single fathers. The 76 single mothers had a wide variety of legal problems. The problems they cited most frequently concerned "divorce/property settlement" (32 percent), "child support payments" (20 percent), and "finances/debts" (13 percent). Single fathers most commonly had "divorce/property settlement" problems (56 percent) and "custody/visitation" problems (22 percent).

Among single mothers, those who were separated (47 percent) were more likely than those who were divorced (18 percent), widowed (9 percent), or never married (12 percent) to have legal problems. Otherwise, having a legal problem was not significantly associated with age, race, educational attainment, employment status, AFDC, or annual income.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

SOURCES OF INCOME

Wages from their own employment contributed to the family incomes of most single parents -- 60 percent of the single mothers and 92 percent of the single fathers surveyed. More than half of the single mothers (55 percent) and 9 percent of the single fathers also relied on AFDC, food stamps, and medical assistance for financial support. Half of the single mothers and 6 percent of the single fathers who received no AFDC assistance also received some income from child support payments.

Other studies, too, have found that the earnings of single mothers are a main source of income to their families (Bane and Weiss, 1980; Masnick and Bane, 1980) and that only about half of the single mothers received any child support payments from the absent fathers (Hoffman, 1977; Kamerman and Hayes, 1982). It is evident from this study and the others, however, that public assistance is also important as both a principal and supplemental source of income, especially for single mothers.

Tapping other sources of income, most notably the absent fathers, to augment the family income of single mothers and to reduce the reliance on public assistance has been identified elsewhere as a key public policy issue (Cassetty, 1982; Wattenberg, 1982). The evidence here suggests that attempts

Table 3.35. TYPES OF LEGAL PROBLEMS BY SEX OF PARENT (MULTIPLE RESPONSES INCLUDED)

	ALL ^a (N=85)		FEMALE (N=76)	MALE (N=9)
	Percent	Number	Percent	Percent
Divorce/property settlement	34.1	29	31.6	55.6
Child support	17.6	15	19.7	0.0
Finances/debts	11.8	10	13.2	0.0
Custody/visitation	9.4	8	7.9	22.2
Welfare fraud	5.9	5	6.6	0.0
Personal injury	5.9	5	6.6	0.0
Child-related (truancy, delinquency)	4.7	4	5.3	0.0
Criminal	4.7	4	3.9	11.1
Probate	2.4	2	2.6	0.0
Paternity	2.4	2	2.6	0.0
Job-related	2.4	2	1.3	11.1
Other	8.2	7	9.2	0.0

^a Includes only those who reported having a legal problem

to increase the other parents' contribution to the family income of single mothers would have to overcome several obstacles, including the other parents' unwillingness to cooperate. Maintaining contact between the children and their father as a means to increase the likelihood of child support payments appears to be an important ingredient. Such an approach needs to be tempered, however, by the fact that some single mothers do not want their lives disrupted by having to deal directly once again with their child's other parent.

HOUSING

Thirty-seven percent of the single parents resided in single family homes; 32 percent in duplexes, triplexes, four-plexes, or townhouses; 28 percent in apartments, and 4 percent in mobile homes. About two-thirds of them were renters. Single mothers appeared more likely to be renters than did single fathers.

Twenty percent (N=86) of single parents, all of whom were single mothers, received public rental assistance. Among those not receiving such subsidies, single mothers paid proportionately more of their family income for housing than did single fathers, renters paying proportionately more than home owners. Overall, 39 percent of the single mothers paid more than 30 percent of their income for housing, including one-tenth who paid more than 60 percent. Those younger than age 35, never married, those with preschool children, AFDC recipients, and those with low-incomes were more likely than other single mothers to be paying higher proportions of their income for housing.

About three-quarters of the single parents found their current housing suitable. Non-subsidized renters and apartment dwellers were most likely to be dissatisfied with their current housing. Those who were dissatisfied most frequently described their housing as "too small" or "in poor condition." Nearly half (46 percent) of the single parents would prefer to move out of their present neighborhood. Most wanted to maintain separate households rather than opting for some form of shared housing arrangement.

The trend in housing programs and services for low income families is toward reducing subsidized housing opportunities (Franczyk and Sutherland, 1983). The findings here suggest, however, that improving the housing opportunities for lower-income single mothers could be justified on the grounds of providing suitable and affordable housing for those who now lack it. Efforts directed toward improving low-cost housing opportunities for single mothers would have the added benefit, too, of improving the overall economic

status of single mothers now paying disproportionate amounts of their incomes for their housing.

CHILD CARE

The most frequently used child care arrangement (29 percent) was a relative caring for the child in the child's home. More than half of the time the relative was an older sibling. Relatives cared for 40 percent of the children in child care and were significantly more likely than unrelated care providers to provide the child care free of charge. Two-thirds of children ages 12 or younger in child care were in unregulated child care. Single mothers were generally satisfied with their regular child care arrangements. Those arranging for in-home care rather than out, users of relatives, and those using unregulated rather than licensed care appeared to be having fewer problems with their child care arrangements.

The diverse and largely informal nature of child care arrangements found in this study is consistent with other studies of child care (Berger and Callahan, 1979; Kamerman and Hayes, 1982). The frequent use of relatives and in-home care, and the importance of arranging for child care that is provided without charge to the mother, however, are not consistent with the usual public policy discussions of child care that favor out-of-home, unrelated, and regulated providers (Moore, 1982). Public discussions and support of child care arrangements that incorporate the full range of child care alternatives rather than emphasizing regulated forms of child care would appear to be the most responsive to the preferences and practices of single mothers.

HOUSEHOLD NECESSITIES

The findings show that, on balance, the needs for food, heat, and medical care among single parent families are largely met after parents seek help for such items. For example, going without adequate food dropped from 25 percent to 9 percent; going without adequate heat dropped from 15 percent to 8 percent; and going without non-routine medical care dropped from 8 percent to 6 percent. These findings are supported by a recent examination of household consumption among single parent families that found noncash benefit programs such as food stamps and medical assistance to be widely used and vital for single parent families (Weiss, 1984).

But if the material needs for food, heat, and medical care are, for the most part, managed sufficiently with help from outside their families, the

needs not covered sufficiently by public assistance programs are not being managed as well by single parent families. It seems evident, then, that existing public assistance programs are important in order to meet the needs of single parent families for food and medical care, but also in order not to exacerbate the problems single parents have providing other material necessities such as essential clothing and essential furniture.

CONCLUSION

The findings from this survey of single parent families reveal evidence of the financial hardships of single mothers, particularly those who have previously been identified as being at an economic disadvantage -- the never married and mothers of preschool children. It is the single mothers who can least afford to pay for housing, for example, who are the most likely to be spending more of their incomes for housing. They also may be paying more than they can afford for housing that lacks adequate space or that is in poor condition. It is the single mothers receiving AFDC and those whose annual family incomes are less than \$14,000 who are also more likely to be going without basic material necessities such as essential clothes, adequate food, or essential furniture and to be having transportation difficulties that limit their families' activities.

CHAPTER FOUR

SINGLE PARENT FAMILIES: SINGLE PARENTS AND THEIR CHILDREN

This chapter focuses on children living in single parent families. It examines their school performance, their problems (learning, emotional, behavioral, physical, etc.) and their relationships with their parents and their absent parents. Since the study survey collected information about each child as well as about the family unit as a whole, the chapter will analyze the data from the perspectives of the single parent family and of the children within those families. This will allow us, for example, to not only report the number of single parent families in which there are children with learning problems, but also to report the characteristics of children having those problems. The reader should note that much of our information on problems which children were having was only collected for children who were age 5 or older at the time of the interview. This was done because many of the questions would not have been applicable to younger children. Therefore, the sections of this chapter which discuss children's problems will only deal with single parents having at least one child between 5 and 17 and with the children in that age range.

CURRENT STATUS AND FAMILY CIRCUMSTANCES

NUMBER, AGE, AND SEX OF CHILDREN

As noted in Chapter 1, the number of children per family in our sample of single parent families ranged from one to seven. Nearly half of the families (47 percent) had one child. Thirty-three percent of the families had two children, 13 percent had three children, and 7 percent had four or more children. It appeared that there were fewer children in families headed by single fathers, but the difference was not statistically significant. In the majority of families (59 percent), all of the children were between the ages of 6 and 17. One-fourth of the families had children under age 6 only, while 16 percent had both children under age 6 and children age 6 to 17 (see Table 4.1).

Table 4.1. AGE GROUPS OF CHILDREN BY SEX OF SINGLE PARENT

	ALL (N=421)		FEMALE (N=387)	MALE (N=34)
	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent
All 0-5	104	24.7	25.6	14.7
All 6-17	251	59.6	58.1	76.5
Both 0-5 and 6-17	66	15.7	16.3	8.8
Total	421	100.0	100.0	100.0

Significance test for sex of parent: chi square = 4.37; df = 2; NS

Fifty-three percent of families with only one child had a boy, and 47 percent had a girl. In families with two or more children, 61 percent had both boys and girls, 21 percent had only boys, and 18 percent had only girls (see **Table 4.2**). Neither the age nor the sex groupings of children in the family differed between single mothers and single fathers.

Within the 421 single parent families, there were 777 children. The vast majority of these children (N=723) lived with their mothers. Only a small minority (N=54) lived in a family headed by a single father. Slightly more of the children were boys than girls (53 percent vs. 47 percent). This was true for families headed by single mothers and by single fathers (see **Table 4.3**).

The age distribution of the children is given, by sex, in **Table 4.4**. One can see that the distributions for boys and girls are nearly identical. Overall, 22 percent were 0 to 4, 28 percent were 5 to 9, 32 percent were 10 to 14, and 18 percent were 15 to 17. **Table 4.5** presents the age distribution of children in single mother and single father families. Although the number of children living with their fathers is small in the sample, it appears that children who live with their fathers tend to be older than those children who live with their mothers.

CIRCUMSTANCES OF BIRTH

In most of the single parent families surveyed (96 percent), all of the children are children by birth. The children who joined their families other than by birth (N=29) include twelve foster children, eight adopted children, five grandchildren, two wards, one stepchild and one nephew. **Table 4.6** indicates that, in nearly half (48 percent) of the families in which all children are children by birth, all of the children were born when the parent was married. Forty-one percent of the parents were unmarried (either divorced, separated, widowed or never married) at the times all of their children were born, and 11 percent of the parents had children both at times when they were married and at times when they were not married. Single mothers were more likely to have a child out of wedlock than were single fathers (52 percent vs. 13 percent). Of the twenty-nine children who are not children by birth, nearly two-thirds (62 percent) joined the family when the parent was unmarried.

Table 4.2. SEXUAL COMPOSITION OF FAMILY BY FAMILY SIZE AND SEX OF SINGLE PARENT

	SEX OF SINGLE PARENT			
	ALL		FEMALE	MALE
	(N=421)		(N=387)	(N=34)
	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent
One Child in Family	(N=198)		(N=178)	(N=20)
Girl	94	47.5	46.1	60.0
Boy	104	52.5	53.9	40.0
Total	198	100.0	100.0	100.0
Two or More Children in Family	(N=223)		(N=209)	(N=14)
Girls only	39	17.5	17.2	21.4
Boys only	47	21.1	20.6	28.6
Both girls and boys	137	61.4	62.2	50.0
Total	223	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: Significance test for one child in family: corrected chi square = .90;
df = 1; NS

Significance test for two or more children in family: chi square = .85;
df = 2; NS

Table 4.3. SEX OF CHILDREN IN SINGLE PARENT FAMILIES BY SEX OF SINGLE PARENT

SEX OF CHILDREN	SEX OF SINGLE PARENT					
	ALL		FEMALE		MALE	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Girls	367	47.2	341	47.2	26	48.1
Boys	410	52.8	382	52.8	28	51.9
Total	777	100.0	723	100.0	54	100.0

Note: Significance test for sex of single parent: corrected chi square = 0;
df = 1; NS

Table 4.4. AGE OF CHILDREN IN SINGLE PARENT FAMILIES BY SEX

AGE	SEX					
	ALL		GIRLS		BOYS	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
0-4	174	22.4	84	22.9	90	22.0
5-9	218	28.0	101	27.5	117	28.5
10-14	246	31.7	119	32.4	127	31.0
15-17	139	17.9	63	17.2	76	18.5
Total	777	100.0	367	100.0	410	100.0

Note: Significance test for sex: chi square = .48; df = 3; NS

Table 4.5. AGE OF CHILDREN IN SINGLE PARENT FAMILIES BY SEX OF SINGLE PARENT

AGE OF CHILDREN	SEX OF SINGLE PARENT					
	ALL		FEMALE		MALE	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
0-4	174	22.4	168	23.2	6	11.1
5-9	218	28.0	205	28.4	13	24.1
10-14	246	31.7	228	31.5	18	33.3
15-17	139	17.9	122	16.9	17	31.5
Total	777	100.0	723	100.0	54	100.0

Note: Significance test for sex of single parent: chi square = 9.67; df = 3; NS

Table 4.6. MARITAL STATUS OF PARENT WHEN CHILDREN WERE BORN BY SEX OF SINGLE PARENT^a

MARITAL STATUS WHEN CHILDREN WERE BORN	SEX OF SINGLE PARENT			
	ALL		FEMALE	MALE
	(N=404)		(N=372)	(N=32)
	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent
Married, for all children	194	48.0	44.6	87.5
Unmarried, for all children	165	40.9	43.8	6.3
Some when married, others when unmarried	45	11.1	11.6	6.3
Total	404	100.0	100.0	100.0

^a Includes only families in which all children are children by birth.

Note: Significance test for sex of single parent: chi square = 22.21; df = 2; p < .0001

ABSENT PARENT'S INVOLVEMENT

Ninety-four percent of single parents have sole physical custody of all of their children.¹ Six percent (N=26) have other custody arrangements, most often joint physical custody. Single fathers appear less likely to have sole physical custody of all of their children (see Table 4.7). In 387 of the 421 single parent families, at least one of the absent parents was still alive. In 19 percent (N=75) of these 387 families there was more than one absent parent. Sixty families had two absent parents, thirteen had three absent parents, one had four, and one had five.

SCHOOL OR LEARNING PROBLEMS

Three-fourths of the families surveyed (N=315) had at least one child in school (kindergarten through twelfth grade). In nearly half of these families (47 percent), there was only one child in school. About one-third (32 percent) had two children in school, and 21 percent had three or more in school. This section focuses on single parent families with children in school, and the children attending school in those families, and considers the following questions: How well are children from single parent families doing in school, according to parental assessments? Are the children receiving help with learning problems? Are they having school-related behavior problems? Are school or learning problems associated with family circumstances or characteristics?

HOW WELL CHILDREN ARE DOING IN SCHOOL

Parental Assessments of School Performance

Over one-fourth of single parents with children in school (29 percent) said that at least one of their children was doing below average school work. There was no significant difference on this item between single mothers and single fathers.

Nineteen percent of the children in school were rated by their parents as doing below average work. Approximately equal proportions were rated as being

¹ This includes court-ordered physical custody as well as cases in which custody is not addressed (e.g., a widowed or never married parent).

Table 4.7. CUSTODY ARRANGEMENTS OF FAMILY BY SEX OF SINGLE PARENT

CUSTODY	SEX OF SINGLE PARENT			
	ALL		FEMALE	MALE
	(N=421)		(N=387)	(N=34)
	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent
Sole physical for all children	395	93.8	94.3	12.4
Other arrangements	26	6.2	5.7	17.6
Total	421	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: Significance test for sex of single parent: corrected chi square = 6.38;
df = 1; NS

either average (41 percent) or above average (40 percent). It appeared that boys were more likely to be rated as doing below average work than were girls; and 15 to 17 year olds appeared more likely to be rated below average than were younger children (see **Table 4.8**). Children who joined the family other than by birth (e.g., foster children, adopted children) also appeared more likely to be rated below average.

Serious Concern About Learning Problems

Nine percent of the parents with at least one child in school said that, during the past year, they had serious concerns about the learning problems of one or more of their children. The proportions of single mothers and single fathers indicating a concern were quite similar (8 percent and 10 percent, respectively).

A serious concern over a learning problem was indicated for 5 percent (N=29) of the children currently enrolled in school. There was no significant difference by either the sex or the age of the child (see **Table 4.9**). Children for whom a serious concern over learning problems was expressed were more likely to have their school performance rated below average by their parents (see **Appendix Table D-1**).

HELP FOR LEARNING PROBLEMS

Special Education Programs

We asked parents with children in school whether any of their children was in a special education program for learning problems. Programs included in this category were programs for children with learning disabilities as well as federally funded supplemental educational services such as Title 1/Chapter 1 and Title 4.²

² A child with a learning disability has been diagnosed as having problems listening, thinking, speaking, reading, writing, spelling, or doing mathematical calculations due to a disorder in the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or using language. Title 1/Chapter 1 of the Education Consolidation Improvement Act of 1966 is a federal program for educationally disadvantaged children in areas having high concentrations of low income families. The program provides supplemental services to assist in developing basic skills in reading and math. Title 4 of the 1977 Indian Education Act provides federal money for supplemental education for American Indian children with educational needs.

Table 4.8. PARENTS' RATINGS OF THEIR CHILDREN'S SCHOOL PERFORMANCE BY SEX AND AGE^a

PERFORMANCE RATING	ALL		SEX		AGE		
	Number	Percent	GIRLS	BOYS	5-9	10-14	15-17
			(N=265) Percent	(N=290) Percent	(N=182) Percent	(N=246) Percent	(N=127) Percent
Below Average	106	19.1	15.8	22.1	15.4	17.5	27.6
Average or Above	449	80.9	84.2	77.9	84.6	82.5	72.4
Total	555	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

^a Includes only children who are attending school

Note: Significance test for sex: corrected chi square = 3.08; df = 1; NS
Significance test for age: chi square = 7.93; df = 2; NS

Table 4.9. CHILDREN FOR WHOM PARENTS HAD A SERIOUS CONCERN OVER LEARNING PROBLEMS IN THE PAST YEAR BY SEX AND AGE^a

SERIOUS CONCERN EXPRESSED	ALL		SEX		AGE		
	Number	Percent	GIRLS	BOYS	5-9	10-14	15-17
			(N=266) Percent	(N=292) Percent	(N=182) Percent	(N=246) Percent	(N=130) Percent
Yes	29	5.2	3.8	6.5	7.1	3.3	6.2
No	529	94.8	96.2	93.5	92.9	96.7	93.8
Total	558	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

^a Includes only children who are attending school

Note: Significance test for sex: corrected chi square = 1.61; df = 1; NS
Significance test for age: chi square = 3.53; df = 2; NS

Table 4.10 shows the number and percentage of families having at least one child in a special education program for learning problems, by type of program. One can see that 11 percent have a child in a Title 1/Chapter 1 program; 8 percent have a child in a program for children with learning disabilities; and 2 percent have a child in a Title 4 program. Overall, one-fifth of the parents with children in school said that at least one of their children was in one of these types of programs. There was no significant difference between single mothers and single fathers in the proportion having a child in a special education program for a learning problem (19 percent and 24 percent, respectively).

Table 4.10 also indicates the number and percentage of children in different types of learning programs. The largest number (8 percent) were in Title 1/Chapter 1, while a smaller proportion (5 percent) were in programs for the learning disabled. One percent were receiving Title 4 assistance.³ Fourteen percent of the children attending school were in such programs, overall. To add a comparative perspective to these findings, we obtained data from the Minnesota Department of Education. In Ramsey County during the 1983-84 school year, 4 percent of the students (in both public and nonpublic schools) were enrolled in learning disabled programs; and 5 percent of the students were receiving Title 1/Chapter 1 assistance (Minnesota Department of Education, 1984; 1985).

It appeared that boys were more likely to be in a special education program for learning problems than were girls (17 percent vs. 11 percent). Twenty-one percent of 5 to 9 year olds were in such programs, compared to nine percent of 10 to 14 year olds and fourteen percent of 15 to 17 year olds (see **Table 4.11**). Children for whom a serious concern over learning problems was expressed were more likely to be attending a special education program for learning problems at present (see **Appendix Table D-2**).

Help for Concerns in the Past Year

Of the parents who said they had a serious concern during the past year about the learning problems of one or more of their children (N=27), nearly all (82 percent) said that they felt the need for professional help to deal with

³ One child was in a learning disability program and was also receiving supplemental assistance through Title 4.

FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN IN SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR LEARNING
PROBLEMS AND CHILDREN IN SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR LEARNING

Table 4.10. PROBLEMS BY TYPE OF PROGRAM

TYPE OF PROGRAM	FAMILIES ^a		CHILDREN ^b	
	(N=315)		(N=558)	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Title 1/Chapter 1 ^c	34	10.8	44	7.9
Learning Disability ^d	25	7.9	27	4.8
Title 4 ^e	5	1.6	8	1.4

^a Families can have children in more than one type of program.

^b Children can be in more than one type of program.

^c Title 1/Chapter 1 of the Education Consolidation Improvement Act of 1966. A federally funded program for educationally disadvantaged children in areas having high concentrations of low income families. The program provides supplemental services to assist in developing basic skills in reading and math.

^d Any of a number of programs serving children who have a disorder in one or more basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations.

^e Title 4 of the 1977 Indian Education Act. A federally funded supplemental education program for American Indian children with educational needs.

Table 4.11. CHILDREN IN SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR LEARNING PROBLEMS BY SEX AND AGE^a

	ALL		SEX		AGE		
	Number	Percent	GIRLS (N=264)	BOYS (N=291)	5-9 (N=181)	10-14 (N=244)	15-17 (N=130)
IN SPECIAL EDUCATION			Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Yes	78	14.1	10.6	17.2	21.0	9.0	13.8
No	477	85.9	89.4	82.8	79.0	91.0	86.2
Total	555	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

^a Includes only children who are attending school

Note: Significance test for sex: corrected chi square = 4.43; df = 1; NS
Significance test for age: chi square = 12.35; df = 2; p < .01

the problem. All but one of the parents with a concern tried to deal with the problem, most often by contacting the school either to arrange for special classes for their child or to talk about the problem with the school staff. Seventy-eight percent of the parents who tried to deal with the problem said that they felt the actions they had taken had helped with the problem.

Professional Help During the Child's Lifetime

Parents were also asked whether they had ever sought professional help for the learning problems of one or more of their children. Eleven percent of parents (N=34) said that they had. The percentages were quite similar for single mothers and single fathers (11 percent and 14 percent, respectively). Twenty-six of these thirty-four parents sought help from someone in the school system (e.g., a guidance counselor or teacher). Other parents mentioned going to hospitals, child guidance clinics, and psychologists.

Professional help for learning problems had been sought for 7 percent (N=41) of the children attending school. Help was more likely to have been sought for boys than girls (11 percent vs. 4 percent). Seeking help did not differ significantly by the present age of the child (see **Table 4.12**). Findings also indicate that children for whom professional help for learning problems had ever been sought were more likely to be currently enrolled in a special education program for learning problems and to have their school performance rated as being below average (see **Appendix Table D-3**).

SCHOOL-RELATED BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS

Parents who were surveyed were asked to judge how much trouble each of their children was having with two school-related behaviors: attending school, and doing school work as necessary. Answer options for the amount of trouble were: none; minor; moderate; and serious/severe.

Table 4.13 presents the distributions on these two behaviors, by sex, for the children attending school. Findings show that, for each behavior, the majority of children were rated as having no trouble, and there were no significant differences between boys and girls.

To arrive at a single item reflecting a child's trouble with school behavior, we combined the two items shown in **Table 4.13** into a new index that indicated whether the child was having at least a moderate amount of trouble on at least one of the items. Using this new index, we found that, in one-third of the families there was one or more children who had at least a moderate

CHILDREN FOR WHOM PARENTS HAD EVER SOUGHT PROFESSIONAL HELP FOR LEARNING PROBLEMS BY
Table 4.12. SEX AND AGE^a

PROFESSIONAL HELP SOUGHT	ALL		SEX		AGE		
	Number	Percent	GIRLS	BOYS	5-9	10-14	15-17
			(N=266)	(N=292)	(N=182)	(N=246)	(N=130)
			Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Yes	41	7.3	3.8	10.6	8.8	7.3	5.4
No	517	92.7	96.2	89.4	91.2	92.7	94.6
Total	558	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

^a Includes only children who are attending school

Note: Significance test for sex: corrected chi square = 8.63; df = 1; p < .01
Significance test for age: chi square = 1.29; df = 2; NS

Table 4.13. AMOUNT OF TROUBLE WITH SCHOOL-RELATED BEHAVIORS BY SEX^a

AMOUNT OF TROUBLE	SCHOOL-RELATED BEHAVIORS					
	ATTENDING SCHOOL			DOING SCHOOL WORK AS NECESSARY		
	ALL	GIRLS	BOYS	ALL	GIRLS	BOYS
	(N=555)	(N=266)	(N=289)	(N=555)	(N=266)	(N=289)
	Number	Percent	Percent	Number	Percent	Percent
None	399	71.9	72.9	327	58.9	53.6
Minor	82	14.8	14.3	119	21.5	23.2
Moderate	40	7.2	6.0	70	12.6	14.5
Serious/Severe	34	6.1	6.8	39	7.0	8.7
Total	555	100.0	100.0	555	100.0	100.0

^a Includes only children who are attending school

Note: Significance test for attending school: chi square = 1.50; df = 3; NS
Significance test for doing school work: chi square = 7.74; df = 3; NS

amount of trouble with school behavior. Single fathers appeared more likely to have a child experiencing trouble with school behavior than single mothers (48 percent vs. 31 percent). Twenty-three percent of the children attending school in these families were having trouble with school behavior, using the combined index. There was a significant difference by the age of the child. Thirteen percent of 5 to 9 year olds were having trouble with school behavior, compared to twenty-four percent of 10 to 14 year olds, and thirty-six percent of 15 to 17 year olds. It appeared that boys were more likely to be having trouble than were girls (see **Table 4.14**).

Children having trouble with school behavior were also more likely to be in special education programs for learning problems, to have their school performance rated below average by their parent, and to have had their parent express a serious concern regarding their learning problems (see **Appendix Table D-4**).

FAMILY CIRCUMSTANCES OR CHARACTERISTICS

Among single mothers with at least one child in school, those mothers with less than a high school education (among those age 25 and over only) were more likely to have a child in a special education program for learning problems, and it appeared that mothers on AFDC, those with low incomes, and those either unemployed or out of the labor force were more likely to have children in this type of program (see **Appendix Table D-5**). These apparent differences by economic status are not unexpected, however, given the fact that, in over half of the families with children in special education programs for learning problems, the children were receiving Title 1/Chapter 1 assistance. This assistance is directed towards families in low-income areas. Other variables tested and found to be unrelated to having children in special education programs for learning problems were the mother's age, marital status, age of first becoming a parent (for those 34 and younger), and living arrangements (living with children only versus having another adult present).

Neither rating at least one child as below average in school, being concerned about the learning problems of at least one child, nor having a child with school behavior trouble differed by any of the mother's demographic or economic characteristics, including employment status and the age of first becoming a parent (for those 34 and younger).

Table 4.14. CHILDREN HAVING AT LEAST A MODERATE AMOUNT OF TROUBLE WITH SCHOOL BEHAVIOR BY SEX AND AGE^a

TROUBLE WITH SCHOOL BEHAVIOR ^b	ALL		SEX		AGE		
	Number	Percent	GIRLS	BOYS	5-9	10-14	15-17
			(N=266)	(N=289)	(N=180)	(N=245)	(N=130)
			Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Yes	128	23.1	19.2	26.6	12.8	23.7	36.2
No	427	76.9	80.8	73.4	87.2	76.3	63.8
Total	555	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

^a Includes only children who are attending school

^b Is the child having at least a moderate amount of trouble attending school or doing school work as necessary?

Note: Significance test for sex: corrected chi square = 3.95; df = 1; NS
Significance test for age: chi square = 23.34; df = 2; p < .0001

EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL PROBLEMS

Parents with children ages 5 and older were asked about the emotional and behavioral problems of their children. (Of the 421 families surveyed, 334 had at least one child between 5 and 17; 603 of the 777 children in these families were in that age range.) In this section, we discuss the levels and types of emotional and behavioral problems among children in single parent families, whether children are receiving help for such problems, and whether emotional and behavioral problems are associated with family circumstances and characteristics.

LEVELS AND TYPES OF EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL PROBLEMS

Behavioral Problem Checklist

From a list of twenty-four behaviors, parents judged how much trouble each of their children age 5 to 17 was having with each behavior. Parents were to indicate whether the amount of trouble was none, minor, moderate, or serious/severe. Table 4.15 summarizes the results for the 603 children for whom parental assessments were made. The table shows that 42 percent of the children were judged to have a moderate or serious/severe amount of trouble getting along with family members (brothers, sisters, father, mother).⁴ Other items on which 20 percent or more of the children were rated as having at least a moderate amount of trouble were: controlling temper (31 percent), following rules of family or household (28 percent), controlling anger (27 percent), doing household chores as necessary (25 percent), and managing frustration (24 percent). Less than 5 percent of the children were judged as having a moderate or serious/severe amount of trouble with respecting the law, stealing, wetting,

⁴ This item is a composite of four items: getting along with brothers, getting along with sisters, getting along with father, and getting along with mother. Ratings were given on each item only if the item was applicable to the child (e.g., if the child had no sisters, that item was not rated). The number of valid cases and the response percentages for each item are as follows: Getting along with brothers (N=395): none (38 percent), minor (36 percent), moderate (12 percent), serious/severe (5 percent); Getting along with sisters (N=368): none (41 percent), minor (35 percent), moderate (19 percent), serious/severe (5 percent); Getting along with father (N=379): none (52 percent), minor (19 percent), moderate (23 percent), serious/severe (6 percent); Getting along with mother (N=589): none (54 percent), minor (28 percent), moderate (14 percent), serious/severe (4 percent).

Table 4.15. PARENTS' ASSESSMENTS OF THE AMOUNT OF TROUBLE THEIR CHILDREN ARE HAVING WITH BEHAVIOR ITEMS (N=603)^a

BEHAVIOR ITEM	AMOUNT OF TROUBLE				
	NONE Percent	MINOR Percent	MODERATE Percent	SERIOUS/SEVERE Percent	MODERATE OR SERIOUS/SEVERE Percent
1. Getting along with family members ^b	28.3	30.2	29.5	12.0	41.5
2. Controlling temper	38.8	30.3	20.8	10.0	30.8
3. Following rules of family or household	36.2	36.3	19.8	7.7	27.5
4. Controlling anger	41.0	31.8	17.6	9.7	27.3
5. Doing household chores as necessary	44.3	30.3	18.5	6.8	25.3
6. Managing frustration	44.7	31.2	16.7	7.3	24.0
7. Respecting others' property	59.7	22.8	12.2	5.3	17.5
8. Controlling fear or worry	51.3	31.7	13.8	3.2	17.0
9. Making appropriate decisions in his/ her daily life	59.3	26.2	11.0	3.5	14.5
10. Respecting others' privacy	62.2	23.8	12.5	1.5	14.0
11. Getting along with persons of own age (non-siblings)	59.9	27.7	10.4	2.0	12.4
12. Assuming responsibility for personal appearance	68.0	20.2	9.3	2.5	11.8
13. Enjoying life	76.5	14.0	6.8	2.7	9.5
14. Making friends	79.5	13.5	5.3	1.7	7.0
15. Respecting the law	90.7	4.7	3.0	1.7	4.7
16. Stealing	90.1	5.7	2.4	1.8	4.2
17. Wetting	90.5	5.7	2.2	1.7	3.9
18. Being violent towards you	90.7	5.8	2.0	1.5	3.5
19. Using alcohol	92.7	3.9	2.7	.7	3.4
20. Using drugs	94.1	3.1	1.9	1.0	2.9
21. Destroying property, committing vandalism	94.8	2.7	1.3	1.2	2.5
22. Inappropriate sexual behavior	94.3	3.4	1.5	.9	2.4
23. Running away from home	93.8	4.0	.7	1.5	2.2
24. Soiling	97.7	1.8	.5	0.0	.5

^a Children ages 5 and older only^b This item is a composite of four items: getting along with brothers, getting along with sisters, getting along with father, and getting along with mother.

being violent towards the parent, using alcohol, using drugs, destroying property, inappropriate sexual behavior, running away, or soiling.

Parents of children admitted to a child guidance clinic between 1981 and 1983 filled out a similar behavior checklist. An analysis of these clinic data showed that the proportion of children rated as having a moderate or serious/severe amount of trouble on each item did not differ according to whether the child lived with one or two parents. Behavior items with which the largest proportion of children entering the clinic were having difficulty tended to be the same items with which children in the sample of single parent families had the most trouble.

The percentage of children in our survey rated by their parents as having at least a moderate amount of trouble with each behavior item, by the sex and age of the child, is shown in **Table 4.16**. We found no significant differences between boys and girls on any of the items, even after controlling for the age of the child. It did appear, however, that boys might be more likely than girls to have trouble respecting others' property (21 percent vs. 14 percent), assuming responsibility for personal appearance (14 percent vs. 9 percent), respecting the law (6 percent vs. 3 percent), and destroying property (4 percent vs. 1 percent).

We did find several significant differences by age. Older children were more likely to be rated by their parents as having trouble getting along with family members, making appropriate decisions, enjoying life, making friends, respecting the law, stealing, using alcohol, and using drugs, and appeared more likely to be having trouble with doing household chores and running away. Younger children were more likely to have trouble with wetting and appeared more likely to have trouble assuming responsibility for personal appearance. All of the significant differences by age appeared to be true for both boys and girls, except for the "stealing" item which held only for boys.

To obtain a single measure of the amount of trouble children were having with behaviors, we conducted a factor analysis on the twenty-four items listed

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGES OF CHILDREN RATED BY THEIR PARENTS AS HAVING AT LEAST A MODERATE AMOUNT OF TROUBLE
Table 4.16. WITH BEHAVIOR ITEMS BY SEX AND AGE^a

BEHAVIOR ITEM	ALL		SEX		AGE		
	Number	Percent	GIRLS	BOYS	5-9	10-14	15-17
			(N=283) Percent	(N=317) Percent	(N=216) Percent	(N=245) Percent	(N=139) Percent
1. Getting along with family members ^b	249	41.5	43.1	40.1	<u>31.5</u>	<u>42.4</u>	<u>55.4</u>
2. Controlling temper	185	30.8	27.9	33.4	27.3	30.2	37.4
3. Following rules of family or household	165	27.5	25.4	29.3	24.5	26.1	34.5
4. Controlling anger	163	27.3	25.6	28.7	24.1	27.2	32.4
5. Doing household chores as necessary	152	25.3	23.7	26.8	19.9	27.3	30.2
6. Managing frustration	144	24.0	22.0	25.9	22.7	22.9	28.3
7. Respecting others' property	105	17.5	13.8	20.8	15.7	16.3	22.3
8. Controlling fear or worry	101	17.0	17.1	16.8	15.8	16.5	19.6
9. Making appropriate decisions in his/ her daily life	87	14.5	13.4	15.5	<u>8.4</u>	<u>14.7</u>	<u>23.7</u>
10. Respecting others' privacy	84	14.0	13.1	14.8	16.2	11.0	15.8
11. Getting along with persons of own age (non-siblings)	74	12.4	13.4	11.4	12.6	12.7	11.5
12. Assuming responsibility for personal appearance	71	11.8	9.2	14.2	16.2	9.4	9.4
13. Enjoying life	57	9.5	9.5	9.5	<u>4.6</u>	<u>10.6</u>	<u>15.1</u>
14. Making friends	42	7.0	6.7	7.3	<u>2.8</u>	<u>8.6</u>	<u>10.8</u>
15. Respecting the law	28	4.7	2.8	6.3	<u>0.9</u>	<u>3.3</u>	<u>13.0</u>
16. Stealing	25	4.2	3.9	4.5	<u>1.9</u>	<u>3.7</u>	<u>8.8</u>
17. Wetting	23	3.9	2.8	4.7	<u>7.4</u>	<u>2.9</u>	<u>0.0</u>
18. Being violent towards you	21	3.5	2.8	4.1	2.8	5.3	1.4
19. Using alcohol	20	3.4	2.9	3.8	<u>0.0</u>	<u>1.2</u>	<u>12.8</u>
20. Using drugs	17	2.9	2.2	3.5	<u>0.0</u>	<u>1.6</u>	<u>10.0</u>
21. Destroying property, committing vandalism	15	2.5	0.7	4.1	2.3	2.5	2.9
22. Inappropriate sexual behavior	14	2.4	2.5	2.2	1.4	2.0	4.5
23. Running away from home	13	2.2	2.1	2.2	0.5	2.0	5.0
24. Soiling	3	0.5	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.8	0.0

^a Children ages 5 and older only

^b This item is a composite of four items: getting along with brothers, getting along with sisters, getting along with father, and getting along with mother.

Note: Underlined percentages indicate significant differences at the .01 level.

in **Table 4.16**. The analysis produced one factor using the first ten items in the table.⁵ The reader should note that these ten items are the ones with which the largest percentage of children were rated as having a moderate or serious/severe amount of trouble. Results using this scale were similar to those found when using the individual items. That is, we found no significant difference on the behavioral problem scale by the sex or age of the child (see **Appendix Table D-6**). Behavior problems did seem to be related to school problems. Average scores on the behavioral problem scale were significantly higher for children whose parents rated their school performance as being below average and for those children who were judged as having trouble with school behavior (see **Appendix Table D-7**).

Serious Concern About Emotional-Behavioral Problems

Slightly over one-fourth (27 percent) of parents with at least one child age 5 or older said that, during the past year, they had serious concerns about the emotional or behavioral problems of one or more of their children. Results were not significantly different for single mothers and single fathers (26 percent and 32 percent, respectively).

A serious concern about emotional or behavioral problems was expressed for 18 percent (N=107) of the children age 5 to 17. There was no significant difference by sex or age (see **Table 4.17**). For 28 (or 26 percent) of these 107 children, the parents said that the type of emotional or behavioral problem was discipline or obeying rules, either at home or at school. Fourteen percent of the children were described as not wanting to go to school, and parents were concerned about 15 percent of the children because of family disruption (death, divorce, separation). Other problems about which parents were concerned included depression, anger, immaturity, being withdrawn, and being suicidal.

Mean scores on the behavioral problem scale were higher for children about whom a serious concern over emotional or behavioral problems was expressed than

⁵ These ten items loaded on one factor using the SPSS program involving principal factoring with iteration and VARIMAX rotation (Kim, 1975). The total amount of variance in the correlation matrix explained by this factor was 32 percent. Factor loadings for the ten items ranged from 0.79 to 0.51. The alpha coefficient, a measure of internal consistency reliability, was .90. The scores on the scale ranged from 0 to 28, with each item being scored as follows: 0 = no trouble, 1 = minor trouble, 2 = moderate trouble, 3 = serious/severe trouble. The scale mean is 8.39, with a standard deviation of 6.70.

CHILDREN FOR WHOM PARENTS HAD A SERIOUS CONCERN OVER EMOTIONAL OR BEHAVIORAL PROBLEMS IN
Table 4.17. THE PAST YEAR BY SEX AND AGE^a

SERIOUS CONCERN EXPRESSED	ALL		SEX		AGE		
	Number	Percent	GIRLS	BOYS	5-9	10-14	15-17
			(N=283)	(N=320)	(N=218)	(N=246)	(N=139)
			Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Yes	107	17.7	17.3	18.7	15.6	17.5	21.6
No	496	82.3	82.7	81.9	84.4	82.5	78.4
Total	603	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

^a Children age 5 and older only

Note: Significance test for sex: corrected chi square = .02; df = 1; NS
Significance test for age: chi square = 2.10; df = 2; NS

for other children (mean scores of 13.4 and 7.3, respectively).⁶ Children for whom parents had a serious concern over their emotional or behavioral problems were also more likely to be rated by their parents as doing below average work in school and to be judged by their parents as having trouble with school-related behaviors (see **Appendix Table D-8**).

HELP FOR EMOTIONAL OR BEHAVIORAL PROBLEMS

Help for Concerns in the Past Year

Over four-fifths (82 percent) of the parents who had serious concerns about emotional or behavioral problems of their children during the past year said that they felt the need for professional help to deal with the problem. An even larger proportion (93 percent) said that they tried to deal with the problem. Actions taken by parents included seeking help from a mental health professional/facility (e.g., a psychologist, a psychiatrist, or a child guidance clinic), consulting with the child's teacher or guidance counselor, and talking about the problem with the child. The proportions of parents taking each of these actions were 27 percent, 26 percent, and 19 percent, respectively. A complete list of the types of actions taken is included as **Appendix Table D-9**. Most (75 percent) of the parents who took action felt it helped with the problem.

Professional Help During Child's Lifetime

Twenty-six percent (N=85) of single parents with children 5 or older said that at some time in the past they had sought professional help for emotional or behavioral problems of one or more of their children. The proportion of children (age 5 to 17) in these families for whom such help was sought was 18 percent (N=106). Forty-four of the eighty-five parents sought help from a mental health professional or facility such as a psychologist, a psychiatrist, a child guidance clinic, or a mental health center. Fourteen of the parents went to a medical facility (e.g., a hospital or HMO). Other sources of help mentioned by parents included school teachers, school guidance counselors, and human service agencies.

⁶ $F = 79.53$; $df = 1, 593$; $p < .0001$.

FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS AND CIRCUMSTANCES

Family Characteristics

Among single mothers, it appeared that slightly more Whites than racial minorities had at least one child (age 5 to 17) with a behavior problem⁷ and expressed a concern about emotional or behavioral problems of one or more children during the past year (28 percent of Whites had a child with a behavior problem, and 29 percent had a concern; for racial minorities, the proportions were 17 percent and 19 percent, respectively). We found no significant differences by employment status or the age first becoming a parent (for those 34 and younger). Single mothers who lived in a household with another adult (e.g., a roommate, sibling, or parent) appeared less likely to have a child with a behavior problem than did those mothers who lived with their children only (14 percent and 27 percent, respectively). Other variables tested and found to be unrelated to behavior problems were the mother's age, marital status, education (for those 25 and over), income, and AFDC status.

Family Circumstances

We wondered whether behavioral problems among children currently living in single parent families might be related to the stability of those families. For example, would the child have more behavioral problems if the family had gone through more than one divorce, or if the children in the family had different fathers? We could not answer this question directly since we do not have independent evaluations of each child's behavior. We could, however, examine whether mothers who had experienced more change were more likely to rate their children as having behavior problems. Since the type of change in the mother's life would differ by marital status, we separately considered never married mothers and ever married mothers (divorced, separated, widowed).

Never married mothers were divided into two groups according to the number of living absent parents in the family (zero or one versus two or more). Results from our analysis suggest that never married single mothers are more likely to have at least one child with a behavior problem if there are two or

⁷ A mother was defined as having a child with a behavior problem if at least one of her children had a score on the behavioral problem scale of one standard deviation or more above the scale mean. According to this definition, 24 percent of the mothers had children with behavior problems.

more absent parents than if the number of absent parents is zero or one (42 percent and 16 percent, respectively). This appeared to be true even after controlling for the number of children in the family.

For ever married mothers, we compared those who had been single parents only once with those who had been single parents two or more times. The latter group appeared more likely to have a child with a behavior problem than the former (36 percent and 21 percent, respectively). Once again, results appeared to hold after controlling for the number of children.

Thus, the results, while not strong, do suggest that, in single mother families that were less stable or in which there was more change in the family composition, mothers appeared to rate their children as having more behavioral problems.

PHYSICAL HEALTH AND PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT PROBLEMS

Parents with children age 5 and older were asked to report on physical health or physical development problems their children might have. In this section, we will briefly present the results of those questions, describing the levels and types of physical health and physical development problems among children in single parent families, the help children are receiving for such problems, and the association of these problems with family circumstances and characteristics.

LEVELS AND TYPES OF PHYSICAL HEALTH AND PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT PROBLEMS

Physical Health Problems

Parents were asked to indicate how much trouble each child age 5 to 17 was having with two health-related items: poor physical health, and a physical handicap. The amount of trouble was to be listed as either none, minor, moderate, or serious/severe. From **Table 4.18**, one can see that the vast majority of children were rated by their parents as having no trouble with either item: ninety-three percent of the children were not troubled by poor physical health; and 95 percent were not troubled by a handicap. On both items, results did not significantly differ for boys and girls (see **Table 4.18**).

The most frequently mentioned reasons for a child's being in poor physical health were asthma and allergies. Other reasons listed included being

Table 4.18. AMOUNT OF TROUBLE WITH POOR PHYSICAL HEALTH AND WITH PHYSICAL HANDICAPS BY SEX^a

AMOUNT OF TROUBLE	POOR PHYSICAL HEALTH				PHYSICAL HANDICAP			
	ALL		GIRLS	BOYS	ALL		GIRLS	BOYS
	(N=600)		(N=283)	(N=317)	(N=600)		(N=283)	(N=317)
	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent
None	556	92.7	92.9	92.4	570	95.0	95.4	94.6
Minor	21	3.5	3.6	3.5	11	1.8	1.8	1.9
Moderate	14	2.3	1.4	3.2	11	1.8	2.1	1.6
Serious/Severe	9	1.5	2.1	.9	8	1.4	.7	1.9
Total	600	100.0	100.0	100.0	600	100.0	100.0	100.0

^a Children ages 5 and older only

Note: Significance test for physical health: chi square = 3.32; df = 3; NS
Significance test for physical handicap: chi square = 1.84; df = 3; NS

overweight and being "rundown." The principal types of handicaps troubling children were vision, hearing, and speech problems. Mental retardation, back problems and skeletal problems were also listed as handicaps that were causing children difficulty.

To obtain a single measure of a child's current physical health problems, we combined the two items in **Table 4.18** into an index that indicated whether the child was having at least a moderate amount of trouble with at least one of the items. Using this index we found that, in 11 percent of the families, there was one or more children having trouble with their physical health. The proportions were not significantly different for families headed by single mothers and by single fathers (11 percent and 10 percent, respectively). Overall, 6 percent of the 5 to 17 year olds in these families were having trouble with physical health. There was no significant difference on the index by the sex or age of the children (see **Table 4.19**).

Physical health problems were related to school problems and behavioral problems. Children enrolled in school who had a health problem were more likely to be attending a special education program for learning problems and to be judged by their parents as having trouble with school behavior. It also appeared that these children were more likely to be rated by their parents as doing below average work in school (see **Appendix Table D-10**). Average scores on the behavioral problem scale were significantly higher for children with physical health problems than for other children (mean scores of 13.1 and 8.1, respectively).⁸

Serious Concern About Physical Health and Physical Development Problems

Five percent (N=16) of single parents with at least one child age 5 to 17 expressed a serious concern about the physical health or development problems of one of their children in this age range during the past year. All of the parents with such a concern were single mothers.

The sixteen children about whom a concern was expressed comprise 3 percent of the children age 5 to 17 in the sample. Having a concern expressed did not differ by either the sex or the age of the child (see **Table 4.20**). Reasons for parental concern included hearing and vision problems, stuttering, arthritis, and bone development.

⁸ $F = 19.97$; $df = 1, 593$; $p < .0001$.

Table 4.19. PHYSICAL HEALTH PROBLEM BY SEX AND AGE^a

PHYSICAL HEALTH PROBLEM ^b	ALL		SEX		AGE		
	Number	Percent	GIRLS	BOYS	5-9	10-14	15-17
			(N=283) Percent	(N=317) Percent	(N=216) Percent	(N=245) Percent	(N=139) Percent
Yes	37	6.2	5.7	6.6	6.0	5.3	7.9
No	563	93.8	94.3	93.4	94.0	94.7	92.1
Total	600	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

^a Children age 5 and older only

^b Is the child having at least a moderate amount of trouble with poor physical health or with a physical handicap?

Note: Significance test for sex: corrected chi square = .10; df = 1; NS
Significance test for age: chi square = 1.05; df = 2; NS

Table 4.20. CHILDREN FOR WHOM PARENTS HAD A SERIOUS CONCERN ABOUT PHYSICAL HEALTH OR PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT PROBLEMS IN THE PAST YEAR BY SEX AND AGE^a

SERIOUS CONCERN EXPRESSED	ALL		SEX		AGE		
	Number	Percent	GIRLS	BOYS	5-9	10-14	15-17
			(N=283)	(N=320)	(N=218)	(N=246)	(N=139)
			Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Yes	16	2.7	2.8	2.5	3.7	2.4	1.4
No	587	97.3	97.2	97.5	96.3	97.6	98.6
Total	603	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

^a Children age 5 and older only

Note: Significance test for sex: corrected chi square = 0; df = 1; NS
Significance test for age: chi square = 1.71; df = 2; NS

HELP FOR PHYSICAL HEALTH OR DEVELOPMENT PROBLEMS

Most (81 percent) of the parents who had a concern about the physical health or physical development of one of their children felt that professional help was needed to deal with it. All but two of the parents sought help, most often from medical professionals (physicians) or mental health professionals (psychologists).

FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS AND CIRCUMSTANCES

Among single mothers, being concerned about a child's physical health or physical development during the past year was not associated with the mother's employment status or the age she first became a parent (for those 34 and younger). Having one or more children with physical health trouble was also not associated with the age of becoming a parent. However, mothers who had at least one child with a physical health problem were more likely to be unemployed or out of the labor force, to currently be receiving AFDC, and to have low incomes (under \$8,000 per year). See Table 4.21. These findings suggest that one of the reasons that some single mothers are not employed is the responsibility of caring for a child with a health problem. Further analysis lent support to this idea. Among mothers out of the labor force, those who said family responsibilities were keeping them from looking for work appeared to be more likely to have a child with a physical health problem (32 percent) than those who said that family responsibilities did not limit their job search (16 percent). This apparent relationship still existed even when we confined our analysis to mothers who only had children between the ages of 6 and 17. Other variables tested and found to be unrelated to physical health problems were the mother's age, marital status, race, living arrangements, and education (for those 25 and over).

PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP

Parents responded to a series of questions about their relationship with their children. Responses to these questions and their association with family characteristics and family circumstances are detailed below. Although all parents were asked these questions, this section principally focuses on parents having at least one child 5 to 17 since many of the items would not apply for parents who only had children under 5.

SINGLE MOTHERS^a:
 HAVING ONE OR MORE CHILDREN WITH A PHYSICAL
 Table 4.21. HEALTH PROBLEM BY ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

	AT LEAST ONE CHILD HAS PHYSICAL HEALTH PROBLEM ^b	
	YES	NO
	(N=33) Percent	(N=269) Percent
ALL	10.9	89.1
CURRENTLY RECEIVES AFDC	(N=33) Percent	(N=269) Percent
Yes	<u>17.6</u>	<u>82.4</u>
No	<u>5.0</u>	<u>95.0</u>
INCOME	(N=33) Percent	(N=266) Percent
Less than \$8,000	<u>17.6</u>	<u>82.4</u>
\$8,000-\$13,999	<u>8.6</u>	<u>91.4</u>
\$14,000 or more	<u>4.1</u>	<u>95.9</u>
EMPLOYMENT STATUS	(N=33) Percent	(N=266) Percent
Employed full-time	<u>5.8</u>	<u>94.2</u>
Employed part-time	<u>5.4</u>	<u>94.6</u>
Unemployed	<u>18.5</u>	<u>81.5</u>
Out of the labor force	<u>18.8</u>	<u>81.2</u>

^a Includes only mothers with at least one child aged 5-17.

^b Is there one or more children in the family having at least a moderate amount of trouble with poor physical health or with a physical handicap?

Note: Underlined percentages indicate significant differences at the .01 level.

Note: Significance test for AFDC: corrected chi square = 11.02; df = 1; p < .001

Significance test for income: chi square = 10.93; df = 2; p < .01

Significance test for employment status: chi square = 12.50; df = 3; p < .01

RELATIONSHIP PROBLEMS

Parents were asked how much trouble they were having in a variety of areas of childrearing or parent-child relationships. Possible responses to the fourteen items included in the survey were: none, minor, moderate, and serious/severe. **Table 4.22** lists the responses for the single parents who had at least one child age 5 or older.⁹

There were two items with which more than 20 percent of the parents were having at least a moderate amount of trouble: "your ability to deal with problems of raising children" (23 percent), and "your ability to handle discipline and punishment" (22 percent). Fewer than 10 percent of the parents reported a moderate or serious/severe amount of trouble with teaching their children about sex (8 percent), protecting their children from physical or sexual abuse or exploitation (8 percent), and providing children with love and affection (5 percent). Comparisons of single mothers and single fathers on these items revealed no significant differences.

The responses to the fourteen items for parents who only had children under age 5 are presented in **Table 4.23**. In general, smaller proportions of these parents were having trouble with the items. There was one item with which more than 20 percent of the parents were having a moderate or serious/severe amount of trouble -- "your ability to deal with problems of raising children" -- while fewer than 10 percent of the parents reported having at least a moderate amount of trouble with nine of the items.

In order to arrive at a single measure of parent-child relationships for parents with children age 5 to 17, we conducted a factor analysis on thirteen of the items in **Table 4.22**. (The item concerning advice about education or career plans was excluded because of the large number of parents who said this item was not applicable.) The analysis produced one factor that used five of the items:¹⁰

⁹ The reader should note that there were thirty parents who felt that item ten -- the ability to advise children about education or career plans -- did not apply, most likely because of the age of the children.

¹⁰ The total amount of variance in the correlation matrix explained by this factor was 41 percent. Factor loadings for the five items ranged from 0.76 to 0.55. The alpha coefficient, a measure of internal consistency reliability, was .86. The scores on the scale ranged from 0 to 15, with each item scored as follows: 0 = no trouble, 1 = minor trouble, 2 = moderate trouble, 3 = serious/severe trouble. The scale mean is 3.48, with a standard deviation of 3.41.

Table 4.22. THE AMOUNT OF TROUBLE SINGLE PARENTS WITH CHILDREN AGES 5 TO 17 ARE HAVING WITH THE PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP (N=334)

ITEM	NUMBER	AMOUNT OF TROUBLE				
		NONE PERCENT	MINOR PERCENT	MODERATE PERCENT	SERIOUS/SEVERE PERCENT	MODERATE OR SERIOUS/SEVERE PERCENT
1. Your ability to deal with problems of raising children	334	41.3	35.9	18.3	4.5	22.8
2. Your ability to handle discipline and punishment	334	50.3	27.5	17.4	4.8	22.2
3. Your ability to provide your children with appropriate recreational and play activities	334	56.9	24.0	14.7	4.5	19.2
4. Your ability to delegate household chores to your children	334	52.7	29.3	14.7	3.3	18.0
5. The respect your children show you	334	52.1	30.8	14.7	2.4	17.1
6. Your ability to help your children with their schoolwork	334	62.0	22.2	11.7	4.2	15.9
7. The way your children are turning out	334	61.4	22.7	11.4	4.5	15.9
8. Your ability to handle concerns about family loss (death, divorce, separation)	333	65.8	19.2	11.1	3.9	15.0
9. Communication between children and you	334	58.7	26.9	11.4	3.0	14.4
10. Your ability to advise your children about education or career plans	304	69.1	18.4	9.9	2.6	12.5
11. Your ability to provide your children with religious or spiritual experiences	334	74.2	14.4	9.0	2.4	11.4
12. Your ability to teach your children about sex	333	75.4	16.2	7.5	.9	8.4
13. Your ability to protect your children from physical and/or sexual abuse and/or exploitation	332	81.6	10.6	5.1	2.7	7.8
14. Your ability to provide your children with love and affection	333	87.1	7.8	3.9	1.2	5.1

THE AMOUNT OF TROUBLE SINGLE PARENTS WHO ONLY HAVE CHILDREN UNDER 5 ARE HAVING WITH THE PARENT-CHILD
Table 4.23. RELATIONSHIP (N=87)

ITEM	NUMBER	AMOUNT OF TROUBLE				
		NONE PERCENT	MINOR PERCENT	MODERATE PERCENT	SERIOUS/SEVERE PERCENT	MODERATE OR SERIOUS/SEVERE PERCENT
1. Your ability to deal with problems of raising children	87	43.7	35.6	20.7	0.0	20.7
2. Your ability to handle discipline and punishment	87	54.0	27.6	13.8	4.6	18.4
3. Your ability to provide your children with appropriate recreational and play activities	87	56.3	31.0	11.5	1.2	12.7
4. Your ability to delegate household chores to your children	87	80.5	11.5	8.0	0.0	8.0
5. The respect your children show you	87	63.2	24.1	11.5	1.2	12.7
6. Your ability to help your children with their schoolwork	87	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
7. The way your children are turning out	87	66.7	24.1	8.0	1.2	9.2
8. Your ability to handle concerns about family loss (death, divorce, separation)	87	65.5	16.1	14.9	3.5	18.4
9. Communication between children and you	87	75.9	19.5	4.6	0.0	4.6
10. Your ability to advise your children about education or career plans	27	81.5	11.1	7.4	0.0	7.4
11. Your ability to provide your children with religious or spiritual experiences	87	81.6	11.5	5.7	1.2	6.9
12. Your ability to teach your children about sex	87	88.5	5.7	4.6	1.2	5.8
13. Your ability to protect your children from physical and/or sexual abuse and/or exploitation	87	87.4	9.2	1.1	2.3	3.4
14. Your ability to provide your children with love and affection	87	94.3	5.7	0.0	0.0	0.0

- your ability to deal with problems of raising children
- your ability to handle discipline and punishment
- the respect your children show you
- the way your children are turning out
- communication between children and you

The average scores on this parenting role scale were not significantly different for single mothers and single fathers.

FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS AND CIRCUMSTANCES

Among single mothers with children age 5 to 17, we found no significant differences on the parenting role scale by the mother's employment status. For mothers 34 and younger, the age of first becoming a parent (as a teenager versus 20 or older) was also not related to the scale.

Having parent-child relationship problems was related to having children with school, behavioral, and physical health problems. That is, mothers with higher average scores on the parenting role scale were more likely to rate at least one child's school performance as below average, to judge one or more children as having school behavior problems, to have a child with a behavioral problem, and to have a child with a physical health problem (see **Appendix Tables D-11 and D-12**).

THE ABSENT PARENT

Parents were asked several questions about their children's other parent: the absent parent. This section focuses on those families in which there was at least one living absent parent. The section describes the level of contact the absent parent has with his or her children, how single parents feel about that relationship, and the association of that relationship with family characteristics and circumstances.

ABSENT PARENT'S RELATIONSHIP TO CHILDREN

Contact With Absent Parent

As noted earlier, in 387 of the 421 surveyed single parent families, one or more absent parents was still alive. We asked these 387 parents whether their children spent any time with their absent parent. Forty percent said that none of their children spent any time at all with an absent parent.

Single mothers were more likely to say their children spent no time with an absent parent than were single fathers (43 percent vs. 16 percent).¹¹ A national survey of children found similar results. Close to half of the children with an absent parent had no contact with that parent in the previous year (Peterson and Zill, 1984).

Where Children See the Absent Parent

An absent parent did have contact with the children in 231 of the single parent families. These single parents were asked how much time their children spent with an absent parent away from home and how often the absent parent came to visit the children at home. **Tables 4.24** and **4.25** present the responses to these two questions. (In the 75 families where there was more than one absent parent, the absent parent who spent the most time with his or her children is represented in these tables and in the other tables in this section.¹² If two (or more) absent parents spent the same amount of time with the children, one parent was randomly selected.)

Table 4.24 shows the number of days per year that children spent away from home with an absent parent. The time spent could be one long stay or a series of short stays (e.g., every other weekend). The table indicates that in 11 percent of the families, none of the children spent time with the absent parent away from home. In 46 percent of the families, children spent from one to thirty-five days per year with an absent parent, and children in 42 percent of the families spent thirty-six or more days with an absent parent during the course of the year. Single mothers appeared more likely than single fathers to say that the children spent no time with an absent parent, and single fathers appeared to be more likely to say that the children spent thirty-six days or more per year with an absent parent.

The number of times an absent parent visited the children's home is shown in **Table 4.25**. In slightly over one-third of these families (35 percent), an absent parent visited the children at least once a month. Twenty-six percent of the single parents said an absent parent visited very rarely -- maybe a few times a year, and 39 percent said that an absent parent never came to the home

¹¹ Corrected chi square = 7.75; df = 1; p < .01.

¹² In eleven families, children had contact with more than one absent parent. In eight of these families, the amount of contact with each absent parent was the same.

HOW MUCH TIME ABSENT PARENT SPENDS WITH CHILD AWAY FROM CHILD'S
Table 4.24. HOME BY SEX OF THE SURVEYED SINGLE PARENT^a

AMOUNT OF TIME PER YEAR ^b	SEX OF THE SURVEYED SINGLE PARENT			
	ALL		FEMALE	MALE
	(N=231)		(N=204)	(N=27)
	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent
None	26	11.3	11.8	7.4
1-35 days	107	46.3	48.5	29.6
36 days or more	98	42.4	39.7	63.0
Total	231	100.0	100.0	100.0

^a Includes only families in which one or more absent parents is alive and spends some time with the child.

^b In cases where there is more than one absent parent, the table reflects the absent parent who spends the most time with his or her children. The time spent with the absent parent could be one long stay or a series of short stays (e.g., every other weekend).

Note: Significance test for sex of single parent: chi square = 5.28;
df = 2; NS

Table 4.25. HOW OFTEN AN ABSENT PARENT VISITS THE CHILD AT CHILD'S HOME BY SEX OF THE SURVEYED SINGLE PARENT^a

HOW OFTEN VISITS	SEX OF THE SURVEYED SINGLE PARENT			
	ALL		FEMALE	MALE
	(N=230)		(N=203)	(N=27)
	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent
Never	90	39.1	40.4	29.6
Rarely or a few times a year	59	25.7	24.6	33.3
At least once a month	81	35.2	35.0	37.0
Total	230	100.0	100.0	100.0

^a Includes only families in which one or more absent parents is alive and spends some time with the child

Note: Significance test for sex of single parent: chi square = 1.44; df = 2; NS

to visit the children. Results on this question were not significantly different for single mothers and single fathers. An absent parent who visited the child at home at least once a month is more likely to spend thirty-six or more days per year with the child away from home than are absent parents who rarely or never visit the child's home (see **Table 4.26**).

SATISFACTION WITH RELATIONSHIP

Parents who said that an absent parent never spent any time at all with their children were asked how satisfied they were with that arrangement. Fifty-nine percent said that they were satisfied, 11 percent had a neutral response, and 30 percent said they were dissatisfied.

In the 231 families where an absent parent was spending time with the children, we asked the single parent how satisfied he or she was with the way the children were getting along with the absent parent. Sixty-two percent indicated that they were satisfied, 17 percent said they were neutral, and 21 percent were dissatisfied. Those parents who were dissatisfied (N=48) were asked to explain. Fifteen of the parents said their dissatisfaction was due to the absent parent's not spending enough time with the child, and eleven parents said the child either did not "like" or did not "get along" with the absent parent. Other reasons for being dissatisfied included discipline (the absent parent was either too strict or too lax) and the absent parent's bad influence on the child (principally due to drug or alcohol use). It appeared that single parents were somewhat more likely to be satisfied with the way the child was getting along with the absent parent if the absent parent spent more time with the child (visited the child at least once a month or was with the child thirty-six or more days per year away from the child's home).

Another indication of single parents' satisfaction with the relationship between the child and the absent parent was provided by asking respondents how much trouble they were having with the help they were getting from the absent parent in raising the children and with the way they were handling the child's relationship with the absent parent. Possible responses to these questions were "none," "minor," "moderate," and "serious/severe." We found that 41 percent of the parents who answered the question said that they were having a moderate or serious/severe amount of trouble with the help they were getting in raising the children, and 23 percent had at least a moderate amount of trouble handling the relationship between the child and the absent parent (see **Table 4.27**). Results were not significantly different for single mothers and single

THE AMOUNT OF TIME AN ABSENT PARENT SPENDS WITH CHILD AWAY FROM CHILD'S
Table 4.26. HOME BY NUMBER OF VISITS BY ABSENT PARENT TO CHILD'S HOME^a

TIME SPENT AWAY FROM CHILD'S HOME PER YEAR	VISITS BY ABSENT PARENT TO CHILD'S HOME				
	All		Never	Rarely	At Least Once a Month
	(N=230)		(N=90)	(N=59)	(N=81)
	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
None	26	11.3	0.0	20.3	17.3
1-35 days	106	46.1	58.9	45.8	32.1
36 days or more	98	42.6	41.1	33.9	50.6
Total	230	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

^a Includes only families in which one or more absent parents is alive and spends some time with the child

Note: Significance test for time spent: chi square = 25.95; df = 4; p < .0001

Table 4.27. THE AMOUNT OF TROUBLE SINGLE PARENTS ARE HAVING WITH RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ABSENT PARENT^a

ITEM	Number	AMOUNT OF TROUBLE				
		<u>NONE</u>	<u>MINOR</u>	<u>MODERATE</u>	<u>SERIOUS/SEVERE</u>	<u>MODERATE OR SERIOUS/SEVERE</u>
		Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
The help you get from the other parent in raising children	295	42.0	17.0	21.7	19.3	41.0
The way you handle your children's relationship with their other parent	312	53.8	23.1	16.0	7.1	23.1

^a Includes only families in which one or more absent parents is alive and spends some time with the child

fathers. Having a moderate or serious/severe amount of trouble with these two items was not related to an absent parent's spending time with the child or to receiving child support from an absent parent. Parents who said they were dissatisfied with the fact that an absent parent never spends any time at all with the children appeared more likely to report having at least a moderate amount of trouble with the help they were getting in raising the children. A moderate or more amount of trouble on this item was also more likely among single parents who were dissatisfied with the way the children were getting along with the absent parent.

FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS AND CIRCUMSTANCES

Among single mothers only, children are less likely to spend time with an absent father if the mother is never married, is a member of a racial minority group, lives in a household with another adult (e.g., a roommate or a parent), does not receive child support, or has less than a high school education (for those age 25 and over only). See **Table 4.28**. It also appears that mothers receiving AFDC are less likely to say children spend time with an absent father. There was no relationship between contact with the absent father and the mother's employment status or the age she first became a parent (for those 34 and younger).

In those families where an absent father does spend time with the children, the child is more likely to spend time with the absent father away from home if the mother has ever been married and also, apparently, if the mother is older (25 or over) or is not receiving AFDC (see **Table 4.29**). It appears more likely that the absent father comes to the child's home to visit if the mother is never married or is out of the labor force.

For those mothers who said that there was contact between the children and an absent parent, we tested for associations between family characteristics and the items which measured the single parent's satisfaction with the relationship between the child and the absent parent. We found only one significant result. Whites were more likely than racial minorities to report at least a moderate amount of trouble with the help they were getting from the absent father in raising the children (51 percent vs. 18 percent). We also found a relationship between this item and children's behavior problems. Mothers with at least one child age 5 or older who had a child with a behavior problem were more likely than other mothers to have trouble with the help they were getting in raising the children (68 percent vs. 37 percent).

DOES THE CHILD SPEND ANY TIME AT ALL WITH AN ABSENT FATHER
Table 4.28. BY SELECTED DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF SINGLE MOTHERS^a

	CHILD SPENDS TIME WITH ABSENT PARENT ^b		
	Yes	No	Total
	(N=204)	(N=151)	(N=355)
	Percent	Percent	Percent
ALL	57.5	42.5	100.0
MARITAL STATUS	(N=204)	(N=151)	(N=355)
	Percent	Percent	Percent
Ever married	62.5	37.5	100.0
Never married	47.0	53.0	100.0
RACE	(N=204)	(N=151)	(N=355)
	Percent	Percent	Percent
White	62.6	37.4	100.0
Other	43.9	56.1	100.0
LIVING ARRANGEMENTS	(N=204)	(N=150)	(N=354)
	Percent	Percent	Percent
With children only	62.9	37.1	100.0
Other adult present	36.6	63.4	100.0
CURRENTLY RECEIVES AFDC	(N=204)	(N=151)	(N=355)
	Percent	Percent	Percent
Yes	52.1	47.9	100.0
No	64.0	36.0	100.0
EDUCATION (AGES 25 AND OVER)	(N=169)	(N=118)	(N=287)
	Percent	Percent	Percent
Less than high school	41.1	58.9	100.0
High school graduate	61.8	38.2	100.0
College or more	65.5	34.5	100.0
RECEIVES CHILD SUPPORT	(N=203)	(N=151)	(N=354)
	Percent	Percent	Percent
Yes	77.6	22.4	100.0
No	48.6	51.4	100.0

^a Includes only families in which one or more absent parents is alive

^b In cases where there is more than one absent parent, the table reflects whether any of the absent parents spends time with his children.

Note: Underlined percentages indicate significant differences at the .01 level.

Note: Significance test for marital status: corrected chi square = 7.06; df = 1; p < .01

Significance test for race: corrected chi square = 9.47; df = 1; p < .01

Significance test for living arrangements: corrected chi square = 14.99; df = 1; p < .01

Significance test for AFDC: corrected chi square = 4.63; df = 1; NS

Significance test for education: chi square = 9.43; df = 2; p < .01

Significance test for child support: corrected chi square = 24.47; df = 1; p < .0001

HOW MUCH TIME ABSENT FATHER SPENDS WITH CHILD AWAY FROM CHILD'S HOME
Table 4.29. BY SELECTED DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF SINGLE MOTHERS^a

	AMOUNT OF TIME PER YEAR ^b			
	None (N=24) Percent	1-35 Days (N=99) Percent	36 Days or More (N=81) Percent	Total (N=204) Percent
ALL	11.8	48.5	39.7	100.0
AGE				
16-24	25.7	45.7	28.6	100.0
25-34	13.1	41.7	45.2	100.0
35 and over	4.7	56.5	38.8	100.0
MARITAL STATUS				
Ever married	<u>6.0</u>	<u>51.3</u>	<u>42.7</u>	100.0
Never married	<u>27.8</u>	<u>40.7</u>	<u>31.5</u>	100.0
CURRENTLY RECEIVES AFDC				
Yes	16.8	49.5	33.7	100.0
No	6.8	47.6	45.6	100.0

^a Includes only families in which at least one absent parent spends time with the children.

^b In cases where there is more than one absent parent, the table reflects the absent parent who spends the most time with his or her children. The time spent with an absent parent could be one long stay or a series of short stays.

Note: Underlined percentages indicate significant differences at the .01 level.

Note: Significance test for age: chi square = 13.25; df = 4; NS
Significance test for marital status: chi square = 18.18; df = 2; p < .001
Significance test for AFDC: chi square = 6.24; df = 2; NS

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Most single parent families are small families. Forty-seven percent of the parents surveyed had one child, and 33 percent had two children. Only 20 percent of the families contained three or more children. In 96 percent of the families, all of the children are children by birth. Ninety-four percent of parents have sole physical custody of all of their children.

There is at least one living absent parent in 92 percent of the single parent families. In 40 percent of those families, the children do not spend any time with an absent parent, and the majority of single parents in those families are satisfied with that arrangement. In families where children do have contact with an absent parent, most single parents are satisfied with the way the children get along with the absent parent. However, it was also found that single mothers who reported having trouble with the child-rearing help they were getting from the absent parent were more likely to have a child with a behavior problem.

From the data reported in this chapter, it is clear that the majority of single parents feel that none of their children between the ages of 5 and 17 has learning, emotional/behavioral, or physical health problems. Nonetheless, there are families in which the parents feel their children have problems. Overall, 35 percent of the parents who had at least one child age 5 or older said that during the past year they had a serious concern about the learning, emotional/behavioral, or physical health/development problems of one or more of their children. Such concerns were expressed for 23 percent of the 5 to 17 year olds.

It is also evident that most single parents think they are having little or no trouble with childrearing or with their relationship with their children. The main area in which parents mentioned having difficulty concerned the absent parent (getting help from the absent parent in raising children and handling the children's relationship with the absent parent).

In reviewing the data in relation to the family characteristics and circumstances of single mothers, several findings deserve mention. These findings are related to the effects on children of the mother's employment, the age she first became a parent, the existence of alternative caretakers, and family disruption.

Employment

With one exception, we found no association between a mother's employment status and her having a child (age 5 to 17) with learning, emotional/behavioral, or physical health problems. The exception was having children in special education programs for learning problems. It appeared that women who were out of the labor force or unemployed were more likely to have children in such programs. However, the main program in which parents had children was Title 1/Chapter 1 which is directed towards low income areas in which it is more likely that parents would not be working. Thus, the study data do not suggest that problems for children are greater if the mother is working rather than staying at home or if she works fulltime instead of part-time.¹³ This finding receives support from a review of research on children and working parents (Hayes and Kamerman, 1983) which concluded that whether or not a mother is employed, in and of itself, is not a major factor in determining a child's behavior or adjustment.

One other finding related to employment should be noted. It appeared that one reason for some mothers' being out of the labor force or unemployed was a child's physical health problem. This suggests that programming to bring single mothers into the labor force would have to address other issues in addition to job training.

Teenage Parenthood

In all of our analyses, we examined the age at which single mothers had their first child. Mothers (with one or more children age 5 to 17) who became parents as teenagers were compared with those who had their first child when age 20 or older. We found no indication that learning, emotional/behavioral, or physical health problems among children were related to the age the mother first became a parent. This is consistent with the conclusion of a recent review article on children of teenage parents by Baldwin and Cain (1980) who noted that there was not a clear effect of the mother's age on the emotional development or school achievement of the child.

¹³ The reader should keep in mind that our analyses did not include mothers who only had children under 5.

Alternative Caretakers

The presence in the home of another adult (e.g., a roommate, parent, sibling) could provide support to the single parent in caring for and raising children and could be beneficial to the child (Baldwin and Cain, 1980; Werner and Smith, 1981). Our data suggest that the presence of an alternative caretaker may have a positive effect on children. Single mothers who lived with another adult appeared less likely to have a child with behavioral problems than mothers who lived alone with their children.

Family Disruption

Many children in single parent families have experienced some type of family disruption (a divorce, death, or separation). However, children experiencing more disruptions may have more problems (Hetherington, Camara, and Featherman, 1983; Peterson, 1984). We found that single mothers who had undergone more change in their own lives (divorced, separated or widowed mothers who had been single parents more than once and never married mothers who had children by more than one father) appeared more likely to indicate that their children had behavioral problems.

One issue we have not yet addressed in this chapter is the effect on children of the emotional well-being of the parent. If the parent is having emotional problems, will that be reflected in more problems for the child? We have some evidence that this might be true. As a measure of emotional well-being we used Rosenberg's self-esteem scale (Rosenberg, 1965). We found that mothers who had a serious concern during the past year about the learning, emotional/behavioral or physical health problems of one or more of their children had lower levels of self-esteem. Mothers who had children with behavioral problems (using the behavioral problem scale) also had lower self-esteem. This suggests that any programming to deal with problems children of single parents might be having should be directed towards the family, not just the child.

Cautionary Note

It should be noted that findings linking characteristics of parents to children's problems or behaviors are based on parents' ratings of the child rather than those of some outside observer. To the extent that parents' ratings of their children may be influenced by the parents' particular status or characteristics, these findings should be interpreted carefully.

CHAPTER FIVE

SINGLE PARENT FAMILIES:

THE PHYSICAL HEALTH, MENTAL HEALTH AND SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT

OF SINGLE PARENTS

In previous chapters we have suggested that the health of single parents may be associated with the problems their children are having and with their economic and employment situations. This chapter explores those connections in more detail. It reports the number of single parents who reported having problems with physical health, mental health and emotional well-being; and it describes the types of problems and the characteristics of the single parents who have them. This chapter also examines the social adjustment of single parents, including their satisfaction with life as single persons and their support group involvement.

PHYSICAL HEALTH

Single parents were asked several questions about their own health and use of medical care. This section examines the responses to these questions and relates them to single parents' family characteristics and circumstances.

HEALTH RATING

We asked single parents how they would rate their overall health. The majority (80 percent) rated their health as either "good" or "excellent." Seventeen percent said their health was "fair," and 3 percent rated their health as "poor." Results were not significantly different for single mothers and single fathers (80 percent of single mothers gave a rating of "good" or "excellent," compared with 88 percent of single fathers).¹

To provide some perspective for this finding, we compared the data on single parents age 19 to 34 with data from a 1982 general survey of 19 to 34

¹ Although self-assessments of health would not necessarily agree with clinical assessments, other studies have found self-ratings and physician ratings to be correlated and thus to be useful in indicating a person's actual health status (Friedsam and Martin, 1963; Garrity, Simes, and Marx, 1978).

year olds (young adults) in Ramsey County (Mueller and Cooper, 1984). The 1982 survey found that 92 percent of young adults rated their overall health as "good" or "excellent." Among 19 to 34 year old single parents in our survey of single parent families, a significantly lower proportion (86 percent) gave a "good" or "excellent" rating to their health.²

Single mothers who were unemployed or out of the labor force, who were currently receiving AFDC, or whose annual incomes were less than \$8,000 were more likely to rate their overall health as only "fair" or "poor." Mothers older than 34 and those 25 and older who had not attended college also appeared more likely to assess their health as being less than good (see **Table 5.1**). Other variables examined and found to be unrelated to the health rating were the mother's marital status and race.

HEALTH PROBLEMS

Nineteen percent of single parents (including 19 percent of single mothers and 18 percent of single fathers) reported that they had a physical health problem or a physical handicap that interfered with their daily activities in the past twelve months. The types of health problems and handicaps mentioned most often were back problems, high blood pressure, and arthritis. Single parents who rated their health as "fair" or "poor" were more likely to report a physical health problem or handicap than were those who assessed their health as "good" or "excellent" (60 percent vs. 9 percent, respectively).³

Fifty-five percent of the parents who said they had a physical health problem or handicap indicated that the problem limited their activities everyday, and 22 percent reported that their activities were limited at least once a week. Most (85 percent) of those reporting a problem had felt the need for professional help in dealing with it during the past year. An even larger proportion (87 percent) said that they tried to do something about the problem, most frequently by consulting with a physician or other medical professional.

Reporting a physical health problem or a physical handicap that interfered with daily activities was more likely among older mothers (age 35 and over) and those who were unemployed or out of the labor force (see **Table 5.2**). Other

² There was also a significant difference when we compared females only in the two groups.

³ Corrected chi square = 108.59; df = 1; p < .0001.

SINGLE MOTHERS:
Table 5.1. SELF-RATING OF HEALTH BY SELECTED DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

	SELF-RATING OF HEALTH		
	Good or Excellent	Fair or Poor	Total
	(N=308) Percent	(N=79) Percent	(N=387) Percent
ALL	79.6	20.4	100.0
AGE	(N=308) Percent	(N=79) Percent	(N=387) Percent
16-24	83.8	16.2	100.0
25-34	84.5	15.5	100.0
35 and over	73.7	26.3	100.0
EMPLOYMENT STATUS	(N=307) Percent	(N=77) Percent	(N=384) Percent
Employed full-time	91.0	9.0	100.0
Employed part-time	87.5	12.5	100.0
Unemployed	79.4	20.6	100.0
Not in labor force	65.8	34.2	100.0
CURRENTLY RECEIVES AFDC	(N=308) Percent	(N=79) Percent	(N=387) Percent
Yes	72.4	27.6	100.0
No	87.5	12.5	100.0
INCOME	(N=304) Percent	(N=79) Percent	(N=383) Percent
Less than \$8,000	72.6	27.4	100.0
\$8,000 - \$14,000	86.7	13.3	100.0
\$14,000 or more	85.5	14.5	100.0
EDUCATION (AGES 25 AND OVER)	(N=251) Percent	(N=68) Percent	(N=319) Percent
Less than high school	71.9	28.1	100.0
High school graduate	76.2	23.8	100.0
College or more	87.4	12.6	100.0

Note: Underlined percentages indicate significant differences at the .01 level.

Note: Significance test for age: chi square = 6.58; df = 2; NS
 Significance test for employment status: chi square = 32.00; df = 3; p < .0001
 Significance test for AFDC: corrected chi square = 12.61; df = 1; p < .001
 Significance test for income: chi square = 10.52; df = 2; p < .01
 Significance test for education: chi square = 6.61; df = 2; NS

SINGLE MOTHERS: PHYSICAL HEALTH PROBLEM OR PHYSICAL
Table 5.2. HANDICAP (THEIR OWN) BY SELECTED DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

	PHYSICAL HEALTH PROBLEM OR HANDICAP		
	Yes	No	Total
	(N=75)	(N=312)	(N=387)
	Percent	Percent	Percent
ALL	19.4	80.6	100.0
AGE			
16-24	<u>7.4</u>	<u>92.6</u>	100.0
25-34	<u>18.9</u>	<u>81.1</u>	100.0
35 and over	<u>24.6</u>	<u>75.4</u>	100.0
EMPLOYMENT STATUS			
Employed full-time	<u>12.2</u>	<u>87.8</u>	100.0
Employed part-time	<u>16.7</u>	<u>83.3</u>	100.0
Unemployed	<u>26.5</u>	<u>73.5</u>	100.0
Not in labor force	<u>26.7</u>	<u>73.3</u>	100.0

Note: Underlined percentages indicate significant differences at the .01 level

Note: Significance test for age: chi square = 9.25; df = 2; p < .01

Significance test for employment status: chi square = 11.45; df = 3; p < .01

demographic and economic characteristics of single mothers were not associated with this item.

MEDICAL CARE

The most frequent source of medical care for single parents and their children was a family doctor or obstetrician/gynecologist (OB/GYN). Forty-five percent of the parents said they usually went to a family doctor or OB/GYN when they needed medical care, and 43 percent said that was where their children usually went (see **Table 5.3**). Other common sources of care were neighborhood or community clinics (used by 23 percent of parents for themselves, 25 percent of parents for their children), prepaid health care (used by 16 percent of parents for themselves or their children) and hospital outpatient departments (used by 15 percent of parents for themselves or their children). Single mothers and single fathers did not differ in the types of medical care utilized.

Appendix Tables E-1 and E-2 indicate where single mothers obtained medical care for themselves or their children, by the mother's demographic and economic characteristics. In general, we found the mother's economic situation to be strongly related to the source of medical care. Single mothers who were out of the labor force, who were on AFDC, or who had lower incomes were more likely to go to a neighborhood clinic or a hospital outpatient department and less likely to go to a prepaid health care center (see **Appendix Table E-2**). Mothers who went to hospital outpatient departments were also more likely to be younger (under 35), to be racial minorities, to be never married or separated, to have children under 6, and to have less than a high school education (see **Appendix Tables E-1 and E-2**).

How single parents pay for medical services for themselves and their children is presented in **Table 5.4**. The table shows that almost half (49 percent) used Medicaid or medical assistance. Twenty percent belonged to a prepaid health plan, slightly less than 20 percent paid for medical care with private health insurance, and approximately the same percentage paid cash. Single fathers were significantly more likely to pay for their own care or their children's care with a prepaid health plan and to pay for their children's care with private health insurance. It also appeared that single fathers were more likely to pay for their own care with cash. Single mothers, on the other hand, were more likely to use Medicaid or medical assistance to pay for the medical care for themselves and their children (see **Table 5.4**). If

Table 5.3. WHERE SINGLE PARENTS USUALLY GO WHEN THEY NEED MEDICAL CARE FOR THEMSELVES AND FOR THEIR CHILDREN

Source of Medical Care	Percentage of Parents Who Go to Each Source ^a	Percentage of Parents Whose Children Go to Each Source ^a
Family doctor, OB/GYN	44.6	43.3
Neighborhood/community clinic	22.9	24.5
Prepaid health care (HMO)	15.5	16.4
Hospital outpatient department	14.6	15.2
Other (chiropractor, emergency room, folk healer, school nurse, etc.)	5.3	4.5

^a Percentages add to more than 100 percent because more than one source of medical care could be mentioned.

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Table 5.4. HOW SINGLE PARENTS PAY FOR MEDICAL SERVICES FOR THEMSELVES AND FOR THEIR CHILDREN

Means of Payment	Percentage Using Each Means for Own Care ^a			Percentage Using Each Means For Children's Care ^a		
	All	Females	Males	All	Females	Males
Medicaid or medical assistance	48.7	<u>52.7</u>	<u>2.9</u>	49.4	<u>53.7</u>	<u>0.0</u>
Prepaid health plan (HMO)	19.5	<u>17.8</u>	<u>38.2</u>	20.0	<u>18.1</u>	<u>41.2</u>
Private health insurance	17.6	16.5	29.4	18.5	<u>16.8</u>	<u>38.2</u>
Cash	17.3	16.0	32.4	15.2	14.5	23.5
Other	.7	.8	0.0	1.7	1.8	0.0

^a Percentages add to more than 100 percent because more than one method of payment could be mentioned.

Note: Underlined percentages indicate significant differences at the .01 level.

Payment for Own Care

Significance test for medical assistance: corrected chi square = 29.03; df = 1; p < .0001

Significance test for HMO: corrected chi square = 7.05; df = 1; p < .01

Significance test for private insurance: corrected chi square = 2.74; df = 1; NS

Significance test for cash: corrected chi square = 4.73; df = 1; NS

Payment for Children's Care

Significance test for medical assistance: corrected chi square = 34.00; df = 1; p < .0001

Significance test for HMO: corrected chi square = 9.04; df = 1; p < .01

Significance test for private insurance: corrected chi square = 8.15; df = 1; p < .01

Significance test for cash: corrected chi square = 1.35; df = 1; NS

we limited the analysis to only those who did not receive any money from AFDC during the past year, however, there was no difference between single mothers and single fathers in the means of paying for medical care.

The demographic and economic characteristics of single mothers were related to the method of paying for medical services. Mothers who were younger (under 25), who were racial minorities, who were never married, or who had children under 6 were more likely to pay for health care for themselves or their children with medical assistance (see **Appendix Table E-3**). Those having a poor economic situation (being out of the labor force, receiving AFDC, having a lower income) or having less than a high school education (for those age 25 and over only) were more likely to utilize medical assistance and less likely to pay for medical services through a prepaid health plan, private health insurance, or cash (see **Appendix Table E-4**). Among single mothers employed full-time and not receiving AFDC, those who had incomes of less than \$14,000 appeared more likely to pay with cash than those with incomes of \$14,000 or more (40 percent compared with 22 percent). This finding is probably due in part to these mothers' holding jobs that do not provide fringe benefits. Among single mothers employed full-time who did not receive AFDC, a significantly smaller proportion of those earning less than \$14,000 a year received fringe benefits than was true of those with earnings of \$14,000 or more (73 percent vs. 91 percent).⁴

Nearly all of the single parents surveyed (95 percent) said that they had been able to get needed medical care for themselves in the last year, and an even larger proportion (98 percent) had been able to obtain such care for their children. Among those who had been unable to obtain needed care either for themselves or their children, the principal barrier was the cost of medical services. All of the parents who said cost was a barrier (N=15) were single mothers. Only five of these fifteen mothers were receiving AFDC at the time they were interviewed. Of the other ten mothers, five held jobs that included fringe benefits.

⁴ Corrected chi square = 7.02; df = 1; p < .01.

EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

The survey interview contained two psychological scales -- one measuring self-esteem, and the other measuring mastery, or the amount of control one feels one has over one's own life. Single parents were also asked about problems they might be having with their mental health and with drug or alcohol abuse. The responses to these questions and their relation to the characteristics of single parents are discussed below.

SELF-ESTEEM AND MASTERY

As a measure of self-esteem, we used the ten-item Rosenberg scale (Rosenberg, 1965). Scores on this scale can range from zero (high self-esteem) to six (very low self-esteem).⁵ The observed range on this scale in our sample was zero to six. The average score was 1.5 (with a standard deviation of 1.5), indicating that most respondents' scores were toward the high self-esteem end of the scale. The list of the items included in the scale, and the distribution of responses to each, are presented in **Table 5.5**.

The mastery scale was developed by Pearlin, Menaghan, Lieberman and Mullan (1981). The seven items in the scale try to gauge the extent to which people feel they are in control of their own lives. Scores on the scale could range from zero (low feelings of control) to twenty-one (high feelings of control), and in our sample the range was from four to twenty-one. The average score was 13.1 (with a standard deviation of 3.0).⁶ A listing of the seven items in the scale, and the distribution of responses to each, are presented in **Table 5.6**.

To understand how single parents compare with the general population on these two scales, we again compared our data on single parents with data from the Young Adult Study (Mueller and Cooper, 1984). We found that, among 19 to 34 year olds only, the single parents we surveyed had significantly lower levels of self-esteem and lower feelings of mastery than did the general population of young adults in Ramsey County.

⁵ We constructed the scale according to the guidelines listed in Rosenberg (1965), with one modification, which is described in **Table 5.5**. Cronbach's alpha, a measure of internal consistency reliability, was .71 for the Rosenberg scale.

⁶ Cronbach's alpha for the mastery scale was .77.

Table 5.5. SELF-ESTEEM SCALE (N=413)

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
a. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself	21.2	62.2	15.4	1.2
b. At times I think I am no good at all	2.9	38.7	43.2	15.2
c. I feel that I have a number of good qualities	29.6	67.6	2.6	0.2
d. I am able to do things as well as most other people	28.9	64.6	6.5	0.0
e. I feel I do not have much to be proud of	1.0	11.4	57.4	30.2
f. I certainly feel useless at times	4.1	46.5	36.8	12.6
g. I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on a plane with others	25.2	70.3	4.3	0.2
h. I wish I could have more respect for myself	5.5	28.9	52.5	13.4
i. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure	0.7	8.1	55.3	35.9
j. I take a positive attitude toward myself	19.1	69.4	11.3	0.2

Note: When constructing the self-esteem scale, for items a, c, d, g, and j, strongly agree and agree were coded as "0," disagree and strongly disagree as "1." For items b, e, f, h, and i, strongly agree and agree were coded as "1," disagree and strongly disagree as "0." We constructed the scale according to the guidelines listed in Rosenberg (1965), with the following exception: Rosenberg combined items c, g, and i, into one item and recoded that item as "1" if two or more of the three components had a value of "1," and "0" if one or none had a value of "1." We combined the three items into one item and recoded that item as "1" if one or more of the components had a value of "1."

Table 5.6. MASTERY SCALE (N=417)

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
a. There is really no way I can solve some of the problems I have	6.2	40.6	42.5	10.7
b. Sometimes I feel that I am being pushed around in life	5.7	41.0	44.0	9.3
c. I have little control over the things that happen to me	1.2	17.9	65.7	15.2
d. I can do just about anything I really set my mind to do	24.0	65.0	10.5	0.5
e. I often feel helpless in dealing with the problems of life	4.3	26.5	61.6	7.6
f. What happens to me in the future mostly depends on me	32.6	63.1	4.1	0.2
g. There is little I can do to change many of the important things in my life	1.7	22.9	59.9	15.5

Note: When constructing the mastery scale, items a, b, c, e, and g were recoded so that strongly agree = 0, agree = 1, disagree = 2, and strongly disagree = 3. Items d and f were recoded so that strongly agree = 3, agree = 2, disagree = 1, and strongly disagree = 0.

On both the self-esteem and mastery scales, the average scores of single mothers and single fathers were not significantly different. The self-esteem and mastery scales were quite highly correlated.⁷ That is, single parents with lower self-esteem were also likely to have lower feelings of mastery, and vice versa.

Self-esteem and mastery were related to the economic situation of single mothers. Lower levels of self-esteem and lower feelings of mastery were more likely among mothers who were out of the labor force, who were receiving AFDC, and who had lower incomes. Those who had not completed high school (among mothers age 25 and over) also were more likely to have lower self-esteem and lower feelings of mastery (see **Table 5.7**).

Scores on the self-esteem and mastery scales were associated with the mother's self ratings of health. Single mothers who considered their health to be "fair" or "poor" had lower self-esteem and a lesser sense of control over their own lives (see **Table 5.7**).

MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS

Fifteen percent of the surveyed single parents said that, during the past year, mental health or emotional problems had interfered with their daily activities. Results were similar for single mothers and single fathers (16 percent and 12 percent, respectively). Depression, situational stress, and anxiety were frequently mentioned types of emotional problems (see **Table 5.8**).

Over two-thirds of those reporting a mental health problem said their activities were limited by the problem at least once a week, including 25 percent whose activities were limited daily. How often different types of emotional problems limited daily activities is shown in **Table 5.8**.

The majority (80 percent) of single parents reporting a mental health problem felt the need for professional help with it during the past year. A slightly larger proportion (81 percent) said that they tried to do something about the problem, usually by seeking help from a mental health facility or professional (23 percent saw a psychologist or a psychiatrist; 17 percent went to a mental health center; 15 percent said they received counseling from an unspecified source; 13 percent consulted a doctor). Twelve people (or 24 percent of those seeking help) said that they had trouble getting the mental

⁷ Pearson's correlation = $-.51$; $df = 407$; $p < .01$.

Table 5.7. SINGLE MOTHERS: SELF-ESTEEM AND MASTERY SCALE SCORES BY ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS, EDUCATION, AND HEALTH

	NUMBER	MEAN SCORE ON SCALE			
		Self-Esteem ^a		Mastery ^b	
		Mean	(Standard deviation)	Mean	(Standard deviation)
ALL	384	1.08	(1.28)	13.96	(3.08)
EMPLOYMENT STATUS					
Employed full-time	156	<u>1.08</u>	(1.28)	<u>13.96</u>	(3.08)
Employed part-time	48	<u>1.23</u>	(1.25)	<u>13.73</u>	(2.89)
Unemployed	34	<u>1.76</u>	(1.56)	<u>13.00</u>	(2.20)
Out of the labor force	143	<u>2.10</u>	(1.75)	<u>12.22</u>	(2.99)
CURRENTLY RECEIVES AFDC					
Yes	200	<u>1.95</u>	(1.64)	<u>12.41</u>	(2.86)
No	184	<u>1.11</u>	(1.35)	<u>13.87</u>	(3.01)
INCOME					
Less than \$8,000	187	<u>1.94</u>	(1.66)	<u>12.57</u>	(2.99)
\$8,000 - \$14,000	83	<u>1.46</u>	(1.53)	<u>13.34</u>	(3.30)
\$14,000 or more	110	<u>.98</u>	(1.23)	<u>13.80</u>	(2.72)
EDUCATION (AGE 25 AND OVER)					
Less than high school	62	<u>2.13</u>	(1.65)	<u>12.05</u>	(2.81)
High school graduate	160	<u>1.52</u>	(1.58)	<u>13.13</u>	(3.10)
College or more	95	<u>1.06</u>	(1.38)	<u>13.84</u>	(2.82)
SELF RATING OF HEALTH					
Good or excellent	306	<u>1.30</u>	(1.40)	<u>13.56</u>	(2.92)
Fair or poor	78	<u>2.55</u>	(1.77)	<u>11.33</u>	(2.77)

^a Higher scores indicate lower levels of self-esteem.

^b Higher scores indicate a greater sense of personal control over one's life.

Note: When the means are underlined, this indicates a significant difference (at the .01 level using the F-test) among the groups being compared.

Self-Esteem

Significance test for employment status: $F = 12.40$; $df = 3$; $p < .0001$
 Significance test for AFDC: $F = 29.59$; $df = 1, 377$; $p < .0001$
 Significance test for income: $F = 13.73$; $df = 2, 373$; $p < .0001$
 Significance test for education: $F = 8.99$; $df = 2, 309$; $p < .001$
 Significance test for health rating: $F = 43.35$; $df = 1, 377$; $p < .0001$

Mastery

Significance test for employment status: $F = 7.55$; $df = 3, 377$; $p < .001$
 Significance test for AFDC: $F = 23.71$; $df = 1, 382$; $p < .0001$
 Significance test for income: $F = 6.20$; $df = 2, 377$; $p < .01$
 Significance test for education: $F = 6.88$; $df = 2, 314$; $p < .01$
 Significance test for health rating: $F = 37.04$; $df = 1, 382$; $p < .0001$

Table 5.8. TYPE OF MENTAL HEALTH OR EMOTIONAL PROBLEM BY HOW OFTEN THE PROBLEM LIMITS DAILY ACTIVITIES^a

TYPES OF EMOTIONAL PROBLEM	Number	HOW OFTEN DAILY ACTIVITIES LIMITED				Total
		Everyday	At Least Once a Week	At Least Once a Month	Several Times a Year	
		Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Depression	18	16.7	44.4	22.2	16.7	100.0
Situational stress	13	15.4	69.2	7.7	7.7	100.0
Anxiety/fear/nervousness	5	60.0	20.0	0.0	20.0	100.0
Romantic relationship	2	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Grief	2	50.0	0.0	50.0	0.0	100.0
Social relationships	2	50.0	0.0	50.0	0.0	100.0
Multiple problems ^b	8	28.6	42.8	0.0	28.6	100.0
Other	10	22.2	33.3	22.2	22.2	100.0
Unspecified	5	40.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	100.0
Total	65	25.4	42.8	15.9	15.9	100.0

^a Includes only those who reported having a mental health or emotional problem

^b For example, parents who mentioned stress and depression; romantic problems and depression; emotional abuse and grief.

health help they wanted. The reasons for these individuals' having trouble included the lack of cooperation from the ex-spouse (i.e., refusing to go with the respondent to family therapy), the need for an interpreter, and the cost of service.

Reporting a mental health problem was not significantly associated with the demographic or economic characteristics of single mothers. It did appear, however, that such problems might be more likely among mothers who were unemployed or out of the labor force and among those receiving AFDC. Mothers who rated their health as "fair" or "poor" were more likely than other mothers to report a mental health problem (34 percent vs. 11 percent, respectively),⁸ and mothers with mental health problems tended to have lower levels of self-esteem and lower feelings of mastery.⁹ Furthermore, single mothers reporting mental health problems were more likely to report having a physical health problem than were those without mental health problems (41 percent, compared with 15 percent).¹⁰ This relationship between physical and mental health has also been found in other studies (Langer and Michael, 1963; Leighton, Harding, Macklin, Macmillan, and Leighton, 1963; Neff, Husaini, and McCorkel, 1980).

DRUG OR ALCOHOL PROBLEMS

Another indicator of emotional well-being problems is drug or alcohol abuse. A small proportion of single parents (5 percent) said they had a drug or alcohol problem that interfered with daily activities over the course of the previous twelve months. Single fathers were much more likely to report such a problem than were single mothers (18 percent compared with 3 percent).¹¹

Of the nineteen parents who reported a drug or alcohol problem, eight said the problem limited their activities everyday; and five said it limited their

⁸ Corrected chi square = 23.64; df = 1; p < .0001.

⁹ Significance test for self-esteem (has a mental health problem: mean = 2.87; S.D. = 1.88 vs. does not have mental health problem: mean = 1.30; S.D. = 1.37): F = 57.93; df = 1, 377; p < .0001. Significance test for mastery (has a mental health problem: mean = 11.29; S.D. = 2.61 vs. does not have mental health problem: mean = 13.44; S.D. = 2.98): F = 27.08; df = 1, 382; p < .0001.

¹⁰ Corrected chi square = 20.02; df = 1; p < .0001.

¹¹ Corrected chi square = 11.63; df = 1; p < .001.

activities at least once a week. Thirteen parents said they tried to get help with their problem during the past year, mostly through some type of formal treatment program. It appeared that having a drug or alcohol problem was not related to having a mental health or physical health problem. Single mothers reporting a drug or alcohol problem had lower levels of self-esteem than did other mothers (mean scale scores of 3.00 and 1.50, respectively).¹²

PROBLEMS OR CONDITIONS IMPAIRING DAILY FUNCTIONING

Overall, 31 percent of single parents said that they had a physical, mental, or drug/alcohol problem that interfered with daily activities over the past year. Eight percent reported having multiple problems. Results for single mothers and single fathers were nearly identical (30 percent and 32 percent, respectively, reported having one or more problems).

Forty-seven percent of the parents reporting one (or more) of these problems said their activities were limited everyday, and 27 percent said their activities were limited at least once a week (see **Table 5.9**). The table also compares the frequency that activities are limited by each type of problem. It appears that physical health and drug/alcohol abuse problems may be more likely than mental health problems to interfere with activities on a daily basis.

Single mothers who reported at least one of these problems were more likely to be out of the labor force, be receiving AFDC, and have lower incomes (see **Table 5.10**). A health rating of "fair" or "poor" was also more likely among mothers reporting one or more of these problems, as were lower levels of self-esteem and lower feelings of mastery (see **Table 5.10**).

Health problems were found to be barriers to employability for some single mothers. Those who reported a physical, mental, or drug/alcohol problem were more likely than other mothers to say that health problems affected their ability to hold a job (34 percent vs. 4 percent).¹³ Among mothers who were employed (either full-time or part-time), those who reported at least one of these problems were more likely than other mothers to say that health problems affected their ability to carry out current job responsibilities (10 percent vs. 1 percent).¹⁴ Among mothers who were out of the labor force and interested

¹² $F = 11.86$; $df = 1, 376$; $P < .001$.

¹³ Corrected chi square = 61.82; $df = 1$; $p < .0001$.

¹⁴ Corrected chi square = 7.65; $df = 1$; $p < .01$.

Table 5.9. HOW OFTEN DAILY ACTIVITIES ARE LIMITED BY PHYSICAL HEALTH, MENTAL HEALTH, AND DRUG/ALCOHOL PROBLEMS

	TYPE OF PROBLEM			
	Physical Health	Mental Health	Drug/Alcohol Abuse	Total
	(N=81) Percent	(N=65) Percent	(N=19) Percent	(N=128) Percent
Total Reporting Each Problem	19.2	15.4	4.5	30.5
How Often Problem Limits Daily Activities ^a				
Everyday	55.1	25.4	47.1	47.2
At least once a week	21.8	42.8	29.4	27.2
At least once a month	7.7	15.9	23.5	12.0
Several times a year	15.4	15.9	0.0	13.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

^a For those having the problem only

SINGLE MOTHERS: REPORTING A PHYSICAL HEALTH, MENTAL HEALTH, OR
 DRUG/ALCOHOL PROBLEM IN THE PAST YEAR THAT INTERFERED WITH DAILY
 Table 5.10. ACTIVITIES BY ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS, SELF-ESTEEM, AND MASTERY

	PHYSICAL, MENTAL, OR DRUG/ALCOHOL PROBLEM		
	Yes	No	Total
	(N=117)	(N=269)	(N=386)
	Percent	Percent	Percent
ALL	30.3	69.7	100.0
EMPLOYMENT STATUS	(N=117) Percent	(N=266) Percent	(N=383) Percent
Employed full-time	17.9	82.1	100.0
Employed part-time	31.3	68.7	100.0
Unemployed	35.3	64.7	100.0
Out of the labor force	42.8	57.2	100.0
CURRENTLY RECEIVES AFDC	(N=117) Percent	(N=269) Percent	(N=386) Percent
Yes	38.1	61.9	100.0
No	21.7	78.3	100.0
INCOME	(N=116) Percent	(N=266) Percent	(N=382) Percent
Less than \$8,000	37.4	62.6	100.0
\$8,000 - \$14,000	28.0	72.0	100.0
\$14,000 or more	20.0	80.0	100.0
SELF-ESTEEM ^a	(N=114)	(N=264)	(N=378)
Average (mean)	2.25	1.25	1.55
S.D.	1.85	1.32	1.57
MASTERY ^b	(N=115)	(N=268)	(N=383)
Average (mean)	11.71	13.71	13.11
S.D.	3.08	2.80	3.02

^a Higher scores indicate lower levels of self-esteem.

^b Higher scores indicate a greater sense of personal control over one's life.

Note: Underlined percentages and means indicate significant differences at the .01 level.

Note: Significance test for employment status: chi square = 22.23; df = 3; p < .001

Significance test for AFDC: corrected chi square = 11.47; df = 1; p < .001

Significance test for income: chi square = 10.20; df = 2; p < .01

Significance test for self-esteem: F = 36.03; df = 1, 376; p < .0001

Significance test for mastery: F = 38.67; df = 1, 381; p < .0001

in employment, those with one or more problems were much more likely to say that their health makes looking for work difficult (40 percent, compared with 5 percent of other mothers).¹⁵

MOTHER'S HEALTH AND CHILD-REARING PROBLEMS

The relationship between a mother's health and emotional well-being and the problems of her children was also considered. We found that mothers (with at least one child age 5 to 17) who were seriously concerned about the learning, emotional/behavioral, or physical health problems of one or more children were more likely than other mothers to report having a mental health problem (30 percent compared with 10 percent)¹⁶ and to have lower self-esteem.¹⁷ Mental health problems were also more likely among mothers who had a child with a behavioral problem than among other mothers (31 percent vs. 12 percent), as were lower levels of self-esteem.¹⁸ No association was found between a mother's having physical health or drug/alcohol problems and the problems of her children.

WEAK SOCIAL SUPPORT AND MENTAL/PHYSICAL HEALTH

Respondents were asked how much they could count on their friends, parents, and other relatives when needing help and support. Possible responses were: always, sometimes, rarely, and never. Fifty-seven percent said that they could always count on one (or both) of their parents, and 37 percent could always count on another close relative (e.g., a brother or sister). One-third of the single parents (33 percent) said they could always count on a friend for help and support. Overall, 79 percent reported that there was at least one

¹⁵ Corrected chi square = 17.05; df = 1; p < .0001.

¹⁶ Corrected chi square = 18.90; df = 1; p < .0001.

¹⁷ Significance test for self-esteem (has concern about child: mean = 1.94; S.D. = 1.73 vs. does not have concern: mean = 1.25; S.D. = 1.44): F = 13.44; df = 1, 294; p < .001.

¹⁸ Significance test for self-esteem (has a child with a behavioral problem: mean = 2.18; S.D. = 1.67 vs. does not have a child with a behavioral problem: mean = 1.26; S.D. = 1.48): F = 19.76; df = 1, 294; p < .0001. Significance test for mental health problem: corrected chi square = 13.74; df = 1; p < .001.

person on whom they could always depend, and twenty-one percent said that there was no one. Fifteen percent of single fathers and 21 percent of single mothers reported that there was no one on whom they could depend.

Parents were also asked whether, during the past twelve months, they had a problem with having no one to talk to openly about a personal concern. Thirteen percent reported such a problem: 12 percent of single fathers and 13 percent of single mothers. Those reporting a problem having no one to talk to were more likely than other single parents to say there was no one on whom they could always depend (37 percent vs. 18 percent).¹⁹

Single parents who said that there was no one on whom they could always count for help were more likely than other parents to report having a mental health or emotional problem (28 percent vs. 12 percent, respectively) and appeared more likely to rate their health as "fair" or "poor" or to have a physical health problem (see **Table 5.11**). Reporting one or more health problems (physical, drug/alcohol, or mental) was also more likely among those who could count on no one, as were lower levels of self-esteem.

Those parents who reported having no one to talk to about personal concerns were more likely to report having a mental health problem (38 percent vs. 12 percent), and to have lower levels of self-esteem or lesser feelings of control (see **Table 5.11**).

SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT

SATISFACTION WITH LIFE AS A SINGLE PERSON

Overall, 72 percent of the single parents we surveyed responded "yes" to the question: "Are you satisfied with your life as a single person?" Results were not significantly different for mothers and fathers (72 percent of the mothers and 68 percent of the fathers responded "yes."). Moreover, 63 percent of the single parents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: "Single parenthood is the best option for me."²⁰ Single mothers appeared more likely than single fathers to agree or strongly agree with that statement (65 percent compared with 44 percent).

¹⁹ Corrected chi square = 9.09; df = 1; p < .01.

²⁰ Respondents could strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with a variety of statements related to family life.

Table 5.11. SOCIAL SUPPORT INDICATORS BY HEALTH AND MENTAL HEALTH ITEMS

HEALTH AND MENTAL HEALTH ITEMS	SOCIAL SUPPORT INDICATOR			
	Always Count On Someone For Help		Problem Having No One To Talk To	
	Yes (N=332) Percent	No (N=86) Percent	Yes (N=55) Percent	No (N=365) Percent
SELF RATING OF HEALTH				
Good or excellent	82.5	70.9	70.9	81.6
Fair or poor	17.5	29.1	29.1	18.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
PHYSICAL HEALTH PROBLEM				
Yes	16.9	27.9	20.0	18.9
No	83.1	72.1	80.0	81.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
DRUG OR ALCOHOL PROBLEM				
Yes	4.2	4.7	9.3	3.6
No	95.8	95.3	90.7	96.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEM				
Yes	12.3	27.9	38.2	12.1
No	87.7	72.1	61.8	87.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
PHYSICAL HEALTH, DRUG/ALCOHOL, OR MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEM				
Yes	26.0	47.7	44.4	28.2
No	74.0	52.3	55.6	71.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
SELF-ESTEEM ^a				
Average (mean)	1.42	1.96	2.60	1.36
S.D.	1.51	1.61	1.92	1.40
MASTERY ^b				
Average (mean)	13.28	12.62	12.07	13.31
S.D.	2.92	3.20	3.29	2.80

^a higher scores indicate lower levels of self-esteem.

^b higher scores indicate a greater sense of personal control over one's life.

Note: Underlined percentages and means indicate significant differences at the .01 level.

Always Count on Someone

Significance test for health rating: corrected chi square = 5.07; df = 1; NS
 Significance test for physical problem: corrected chi square = 4.69; df = 1; NS
 Significance test for drug/alcohol problem: corrected chi square = 0; df = 1; NS
 Significance test for mental problem: corrected chi square = 11.43; df = 1; p = .001
 Significance test for total problem: corrected chi square = 14.16; df = 1; p = .001
 Significance test for self-esteem: F = 8.57; df = 1, 408; p = .01
 Significance test for mastery: F = 3.34; df = 1, 412; NS

No One To Talk To

Significance test for health rating: corrected chi square = 2.83; df = 1; NS
 Significance test for physical problem: corrected chi square = .00; df = 1; NS
 Significance test for drug/alcohol problem: corrected chi square = 2.46; df = 1; NS
 Significance test for mental problem: corrected chi square = 23.10; df = 1; p = .0001
 Significance test for total problem: corrected chi square = 5.12; df = 1; NS
 Significance test for self-esteem: F = 33.49; df = 1, 410; p = .0001
 Significance test for mastery: F = 8.22; df = 1, 414; p = .0001

Satisfaction with life as a single person was not associated with the demographic or economic characteristics of single mothers. Single mothers who reported having mental health problems were less likely than other single mothers to be satisfied (44 percent vs. 78 percent).²¹ Single mothers expressing satisfaction tended to have higher levels of self-esteem and mastery than those expressing dissatisfaction.²² Single mothers expressing satisfaction also were less likely to be having parent-child relationship problems.²³

Romantic Involvement

Thirty-nine percent of the single parents were "romantically involved," including 40 percent of single mothers and 29 percent of single fathers. Among those romantically involved, 28 percent reported having problems with their relationships. Among those with problems, 35 percent (all of whom were single mothers) felt the need for professional help.

Importance of Remarrying

Respondents were asked how important it was to find a partner or to remarry at present. Mothers and fathers reported similarly. Twenty-four percent of the single fathers reported it was very important; 32 percent reported it was somewhat important, and 44 percent reported that it was of little or no importance. For single mothers, 13 percent reported that finding a partner or remarrying was very important; 32 percent reported it was somewhat important, and 55 percent reported it was of little or no importance.

²¹ Corrected chi square = 26.92; df = 1; p < .0001.

²² Significance test for self-esteem (satisfied: mean = 1.20; S.D. = 1.30 vs. dissatisfied: mean = 2.45; S.D. = 1.81): F = 55.91; df = 1, 377; p < .0001. Significance test for mastery (satisfied: mean = 13.53; S.D. = 2.92 vs. dissatisfied: mean = 12.02; S.D. = 3.02): F = 20.04; df = 1, 382; p < .0001.

²³ Significance test for parenting role scale (satisfied: mean = 2.84; S.D. = 2.93 vs. dissatisfied: mean = 5.24; S.D. = 4.18): F = 30.99; df = 1, 301; p < .0001.

Companionship

Respondents were also asked if they had a problem with companionship or dating in the past year. Twenty-three percent reported that they had had such a problem. Single fathers appeared more likely than single mothers to report having a problem with companionship (35 percent vs. 22 percent).

Problems reported by single parents included the lack of time to date, the lack of money, and problems with compatibility and rejection. In particular, mothers reported having difficulty finding "good," "decent," and "suitable men" "who want a family" and "who can accept children."

Advantages and Disadvantages of Being Single

Parents were asked: "What is the biggest advantage of being single in your experience as a single parent?" They most frequently responded, "freedom" or "the independence to make my own decisions and to do as I please." Their responses, grouped into several categories are in **Table 5.12**.

In contrast, "loneliness or lack of companionship" was the most frequently cited disadvantage of being single among single fathers (29 percent) and one of the most frequently cited disadvantages among single mothers (15 percent).²⁴ For single mothers, "the lack of income" (27 percent) and "the lack of relief from child-rearing responsibilities" (19 percent) topped the list of disadvantages (see **Table 5.13**).

SUPPORT GROUP INVOLVEMENT

Twenty-three percent of single parents belonged to a support group for parents or single parents, either currently or in the past. Results for mothers and fathers were similar (23 percent and 27 percent, respectively).

Among single mothers, the likelihood of ever belonging to parent's support groups increased with age, education, and income.²⁵ Divorced (30 percent) and widowed (27 percent) single mothers, moreover, were more likely than never

²⁴ Respondents were asked the open-ended question: "What is the biggest disadvantage of being single in your experience as a single person?" Their responses, grouped into several categories, are listed in **Table 5.13**.

²⁵ Significance test for age (< 25, 25-34, 35+): chi square = 14.51; df = 2; p < .001. Significance test for education (< high school, high school, some college+): chi square = 9.80; df = 2; p < .01. Significance test for income (< \$8,000, \$8,000-\$14,000, \$14,000+): chi square = 11.97; df = 2; p < .01.

Table 5.12. BIGGEST ADVANTAGE OF BEING SINGLE
FOR SINGLE MOTHERS AND FATHERS

BIGGEST ADVANTAGE ^a	Mothers	Fathers
	(N=380) Percent	(N=33) Percent
Freedom/Independence	55.3	57.6
Close relationship with children	8.7	15.2
No difficulties of adult relationship	13.9	9.1
No advantages to being single	9.5	12.1
Can raise children as see fit	5.0	3.0
Feel better about myself	3.9	0.0
Have more time to myself	1.8	3.0
Other	1.8	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0

^a Respondents were asked: "What is the biggest advantage of being single in your experience as a single parent? Their responses were grouped into the categories found in this table.

BIGGEST DISADVANTAGE OF BEING SINGLE
Table 5.13. FOR SINGLE MOTHERS AND FATHERS

	Mothers	Fathers
	(N=382)	(N=34)
BIGGEST DISADVANTAGE ^a	Percent	Percent
Loneliness/Lack of companionship	14.9	29.4
Lack of money	27.0	8.8
Lack of relief from child-rearing	19.1	8.8
Having sole responsibility for everything	8.4	14.7
Lack of time for self	4.5	14.7
Lack of support for family decisions	10.5	8.8
Lack of role model for children	6.5	2.9
No disadvantages to being single	3.7	2.9
Responsibilities of household maintenance	2.9	0.0
Other	2.6	8.8
Total	100.0	100.0

^a Respondents were asked: "What is the biggest disadvantage of being single in your experience as a single parent?" Their responses were grouped into the categories found in this table.

married (17 percent) or separated (11 percent) single mothers to have ever belonged to a support group for parents or single parents.²⁶ So, too, were mothers whose youngest child was age 6 or older rather than of preschool age (29 percent vs. 15 percent).²⁷

Single parents who had never joined a support group were asked why they had never joined. **Table 5.14** shows that both mothers and fathers had never joined a parent's support group most often because they were getting enough support from family and friends and "didn't feel the need to join" or because they lacked interest and had "never even considered joining."

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Overall, single parents appear to have good physical and mental health and to be generally satisfied with their lives as single persons. Eighty percent of the surveyed respondents rated their own health as either "good" or "excellent," and 81 percent reported that their daily activities were not limited by a physical health problem or a handicap. Most single parents had relatively high self-esteem and feelings of control over their lives. Eighty-five percent said that mental health or emotional problems did not interfere with daily activities. Only 5 percent reported having drug or alcohol problems. Seventy-two percent reported that they were satisfied with their life as a single person.

It should be noted, however, that there were 31 percent of the parents reporting a physical, mental, or drug/alcohol problem that interfered with daily activities. It also appeared that single parents had comparatively more health problems than did other persons in Ramsey County. When we compared 19 to 34 year old single parents with 19 to 34 year olds in the general population, we found that single parents had lower self-esteem and lower feelings of mastery and were more likely to rate their health as "fair" or "poor."

²⁶ Significance test for marital status: chi square = 12.54; df = 3; p < .01.

²⁷ Significance test for age of youngest child: corrected chi square = 9.76; df = 1; p < .01.

REASONS SINGLE MOTHERS AND FATHERS HAVE NEVER JOINED A SUPPORT GROUP
 Table 5.14. FOR PARENTS OR SINGLE PARENTS (MULTIPLE RESPONSES INCLUDED)

	Mothers (N=293) Percent	Fathers (N=23) Percent
Don't feel the need to join	37.9	34.8
Never even considered joining/No interest	37.5	47.8
Do not have enough time	16.4	21.7
Don't like talking about my problems	16.4	8.7
Don't like groups	14.7	30.4
Do not have enough information	12.3	4.3
Don't know what they are	10.2	8.7
Transportation problems	7.8	0.0
Child care problems	7.5	4.3
Inconvenient meeting time	5.1	4.3
Too embarrassed to join	4.4	4.3
Inconvenient location	3.4	0.0
Don't like hearing about other people's problems	2.7	21.7

From our analysis of the health of single mothers, it was apparent that physical health and mental health problems were interrelated. Those who reported a mental health problem were much more likely to report a physical health problem. Single mothers who reported having either a physical health, a mental health, or a drug/alcohol problem had lower levels of self-esteem and a lesser sense of control over their own lives. Reporting a problem in one (or more) of these three areas was also more likely among mothers who rated their health as being less than good.

The relationship between a mother's health and her employment status was discussed briefly in Chapter Two. In that chapter, problems with personal health were cited as reasons for single mothers' being out of the labor force. The data in this chapter point out more strongly the relationship of physical and mental health to employment. In particular, we found that health problems were affecting the ability of some single mothers to hold a job or, among those out of the labor force, to look for work. Overall, 10 percent of single mothers said they had a health problem and that the problem directly affected their ability to hold a job. Thus, the data again suggest that not all single mothers can be expected to be self-supporting, at least not without having some accomodation to health problems that are currently interfering with their functioning.

The conclusion of the previous chapter noted the association of children's problems with the emotional well being of the mother. This association has also been noted by other researchers (Hetherington, Camara, and Featherman, 1983). Our analysis in this chapter showed that mothers with lower levels of self-esteem and reporting mental health problems were more likely to have a child with a behavioral problem. Such mothers were also more likely to express a serious concern about the learning, emotional/behavioral, or physical health problems of one or more children. We also found a connection between weak social support and physical and mental health problems among single parents. The data, then, point out once again that programming to deal with problems of single parents should be comprehensive in nature, taking into account that problems in one area (e.g., mental health) may affect, or be affected by, problems in other areas (e.g., employment, physical health, child-rearing, or social support).

Finally, findings in the area of medical care deserve mention. Less than 5 percent of single parents said that they had been unable to obtain needed care for themselves or their children in the past year. Those who could not

obtain care, however, principally cited the cost of services as a barrier to getting help. Among single mothers, the mother's economic situation was strongly related to the source of medical care and the means of paying for it. Mothers who were out of the labor force, on AFDC, or with lower incomes were more likely to go to a neighborhood clinic or a hospital outpatient department and to pay for services with medical assistance. Among single mothers who were employed full-time and not receiving AFDC, those with lower incomes (the working poor) appeared more likely than those with higher incomes to pay for health care with cash. This suggests that mothers with the least access to medical care may be the self-supporting working poor, those who do not receive public assistance yet do not have sufficient skills or experience to obtain jobs that are well-paying and include benefits such as health insurance.

CHAPTER SIX

SINGLE PARENT FAMILIES: KEY STUDY FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

In 1980, about 1 in 5 families with children in Ramsey County were single parent families, the percentage nearly doubling since 1970. The actual number of single parent families in Ramsey County increased 67 percent from 7,305 in 1970 to 12,180 in 1980. In order to provide reliable and useful firsthand information about the conditions and characteristics of this growing number of single parents and their children, we conducted an in-person survey with 421 randomly selected single parents from throughout Ramsey County.¹

The sample contains 387 single mothers (92 percent) and 34 single fathers (8 percent). Three quarters are White, 14 percent Black, 5 percent Hispanic, 3 percent American Indian, and 2 percent Hmong. Respondents became single parents as young as age 14 and as old as age 50. They have been single parents an average of 6 years and for as long as 23 years. (To be eligible for the survey, respondents had to be single parents for at least 1 year.) Forty-eight percent were divorced; 29 percent were never married; 15 percent were separated (legally or otherwise), and 9 percent were widowed. They ranged in age from 16 to 61, with an average age of 34 (see **Figure 6.1**). The never married tend to be younger than other single parents. White single parents are more likely than Black single parents to be divorced and less likely to be never married or separated (see **Figure 6.2**).

The following summary draws together the highlights from the previous reports, focussing on the issues that stand out as central to the policies, plans, and programs that affect single parent families. The key findings and their implications are organized into five topic areas: the labor force participation and economic status of single mothers; meeting the basic needs of single parent families; children in single parent families; the mental health

¹ The sample of 421 single parents, or roughly 1/30 of the single parents in Ramsey County, has a margin of error of plus or minus 4 to 6 percent.

Figure 6.1. AGE OF SINGLE PARENTS

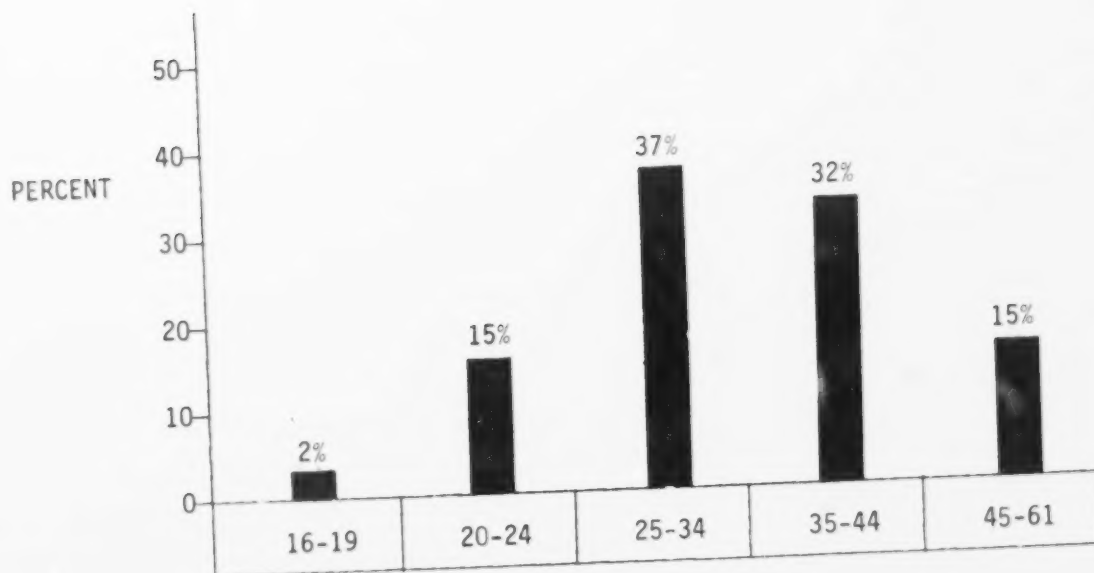
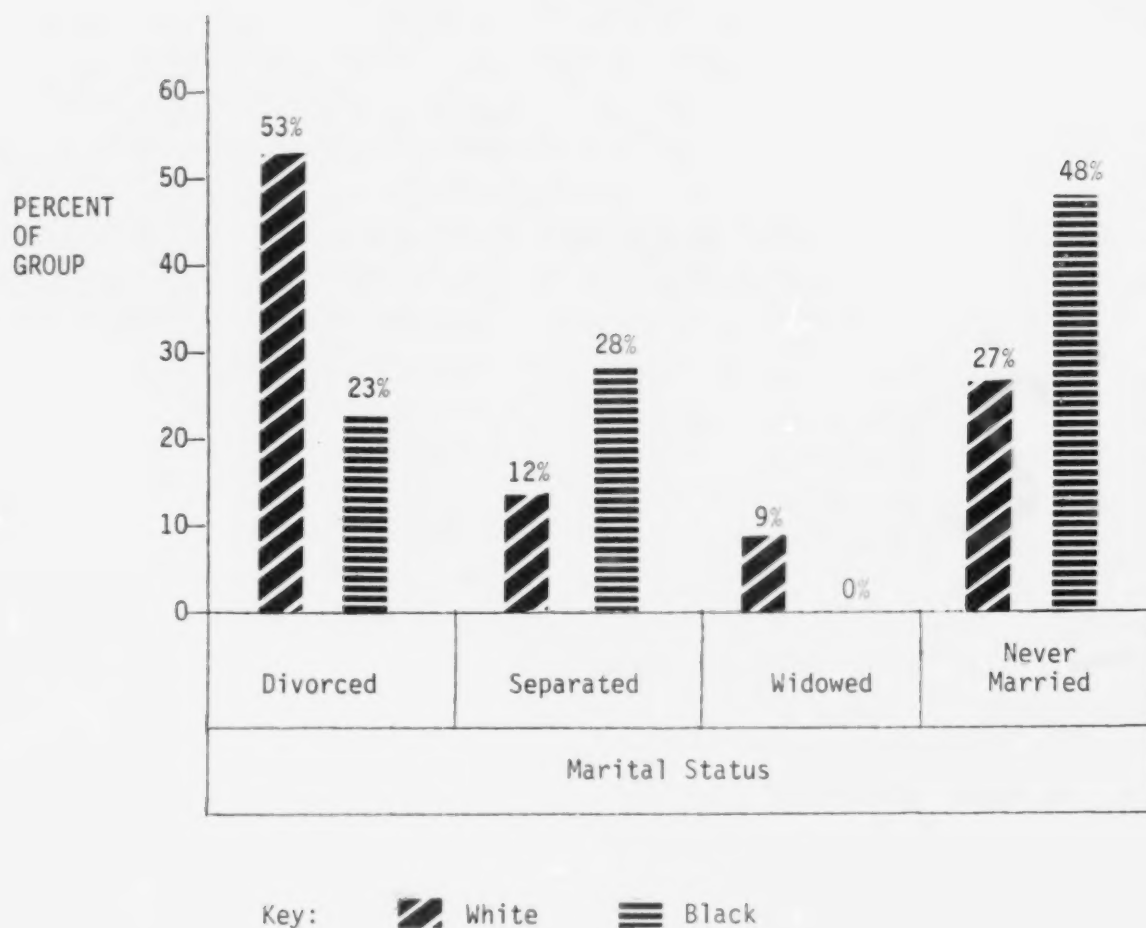


Figure 6.2. SINGLE PARENTS: MARITAL STATUS BY RACE



and social adjustment of single parents; and, finally, childbearing and economic self-sufficiency.

THE LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION AND ECONOMIC STATUS OF SINGLE MOTHERS

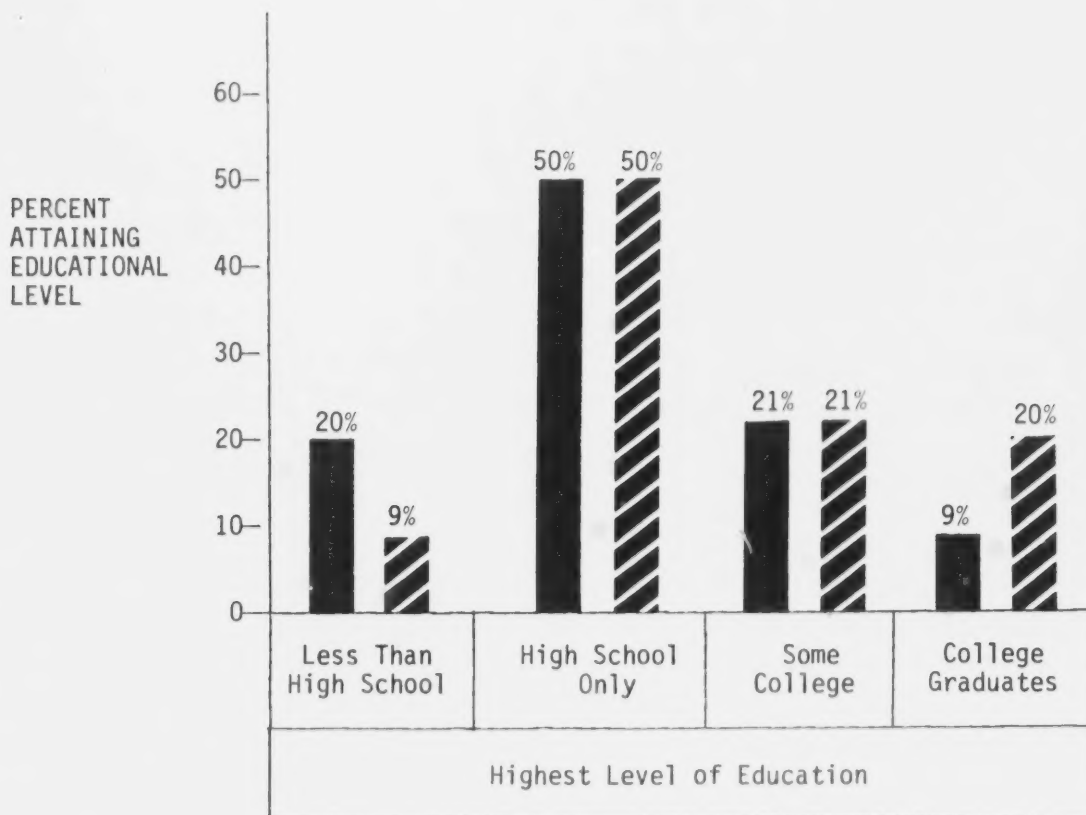
Most single mothers have low incomes. Half of the sample had annual cash incomes of less than \$8,000 in 1983. Only 13 percent of single mothers had incomes greater than \$20,000. In contrast, 15 percent of the single fathers in this survey had annual cash incomes of less than \$8,000, and 64 percent had incomes greater than \$20,000.

Several factors contribute to the low economic status of single mothers and inhibit the ability of single mothers to attain higher incomes. The most notable factors revealed in this survey include: low educational attainment levels; the concentration of single mothers in low-paying occupations that offer limited opportunities for advancement; health problems, particularly among AFDC mothers; and inadequate financial support of children by their absent parent.

Low Educational Levels Linked to Low Economic Status

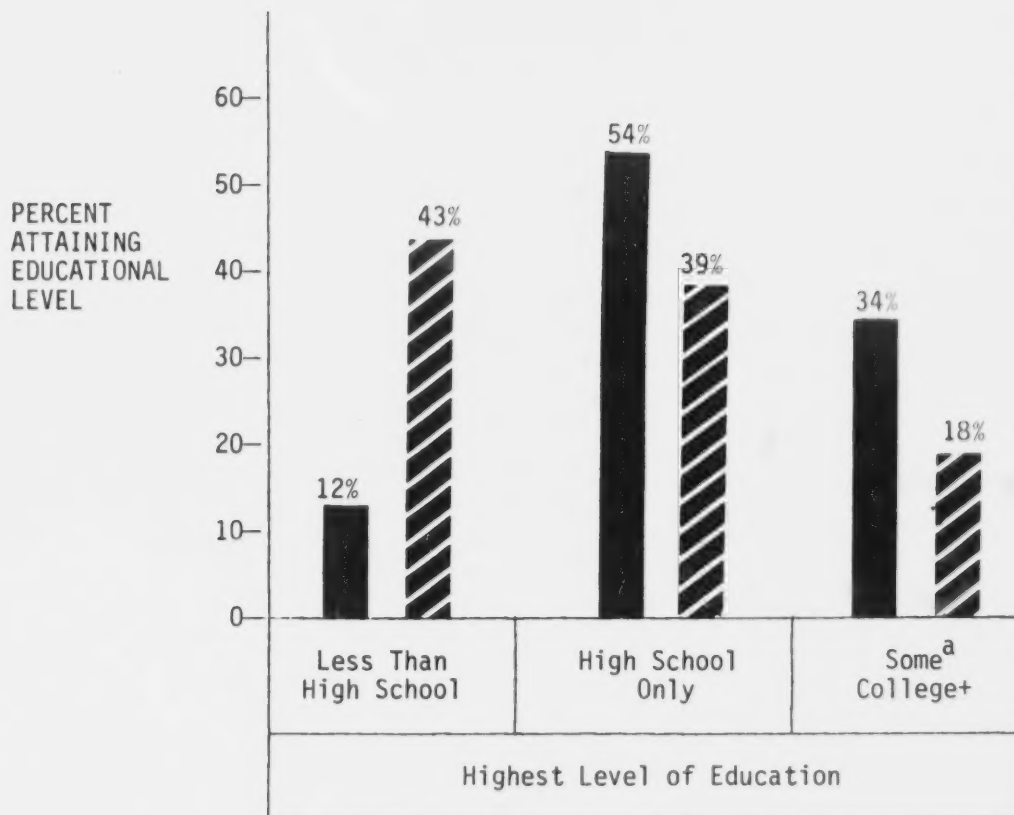
One fifth of single mothers (ages 25 or older) have less than a high school education (see **Figure 6.3**). Only 9 percent have college degrees. For perspective, among married mothers with husbands present in Ramsey County, 9 percent have less than a high school education, and 20 percent have college degrees. Racial minorities make up a disproportionately large part of the single mothers with less than a high school education. **Figure 6.4** shows that 43 percent of single mothers from racial minority groups compared with 12 percent of White single mothers have not completed high school. Those who had their first child as teenagers are also more likely to have less than a high school education than are those who delayed childbearing until later ages. Nearly half of those who became parents at ages 14 to 17 and a third of those who become parents at ages 18 and 19 have not completed high school or its equivalent (see **Figure 6.5**). The majority of single mothers who have not completed high school are out of the labor force, on AFDC, and have annual incomes of less than \$8,000. Most of those who are employed tend to hold lower- status jobs (service or operative positions). See **Table 6.1**.

HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT FOR SINGLE MOTHERS AND
 Figure 6.3. MARRIED MOTHERS WITH HUSBAND PRESENT (AGES 25+ ONLY)



Key:  Single mothers this survey
 Married mothers (living with one or more children age 17 or younger) with husband present, Ramsey County (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1983A)

SINGLE MOTHERS:
Figure 6.4. HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT BY RACE (AGES 25+ ONLY)



Key: White single mothers
 Single mothers, racial minority groups

^a Some College+ consists of those with one or more years of college education following high school or its equivalent, no degree necessary

PERCENT OF SINGLE MOTHERS AGES 25-34 WHO
 HAVE LESS THAN A HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION
 Figure 6.5. BY AGE HAD FIRST CHILD

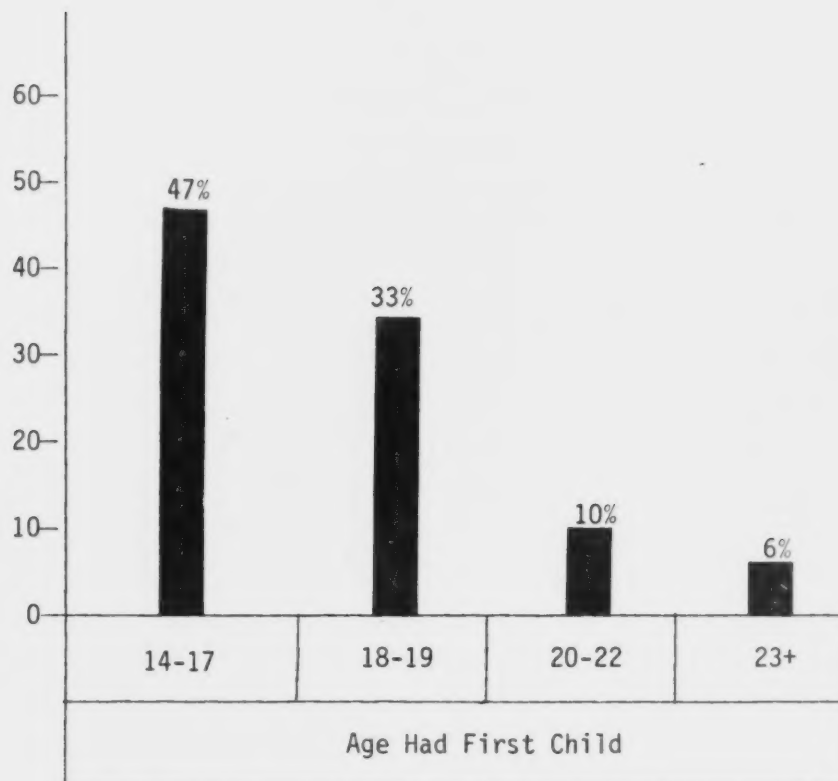


Table 6.1. SINGLE MOTHERS: TYPES OF OCCUPATIONS^a BY EDUCATION (AGES 25+ ONLY)

	LESS THAN HIGH SCHOOL	HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE	COLLEGE+ ^b
	(N=18)	(N=96)	(N=75)
	Percent	Percent	Percent
Professional/Technical	11	7	28
Clerical	11	44	49
Crafts	0	4	4
Sales	0	9	7
Operatives	39	10	1
Service	34	23	9
Laborer	6	3	1
Total	100	100	100

^a Occupations listed by average occupational status rankings, highest to lowest

^b Completed at least one year of college

Single Mothers Tend to Hold Lower-Status, Low-Paying Jobs

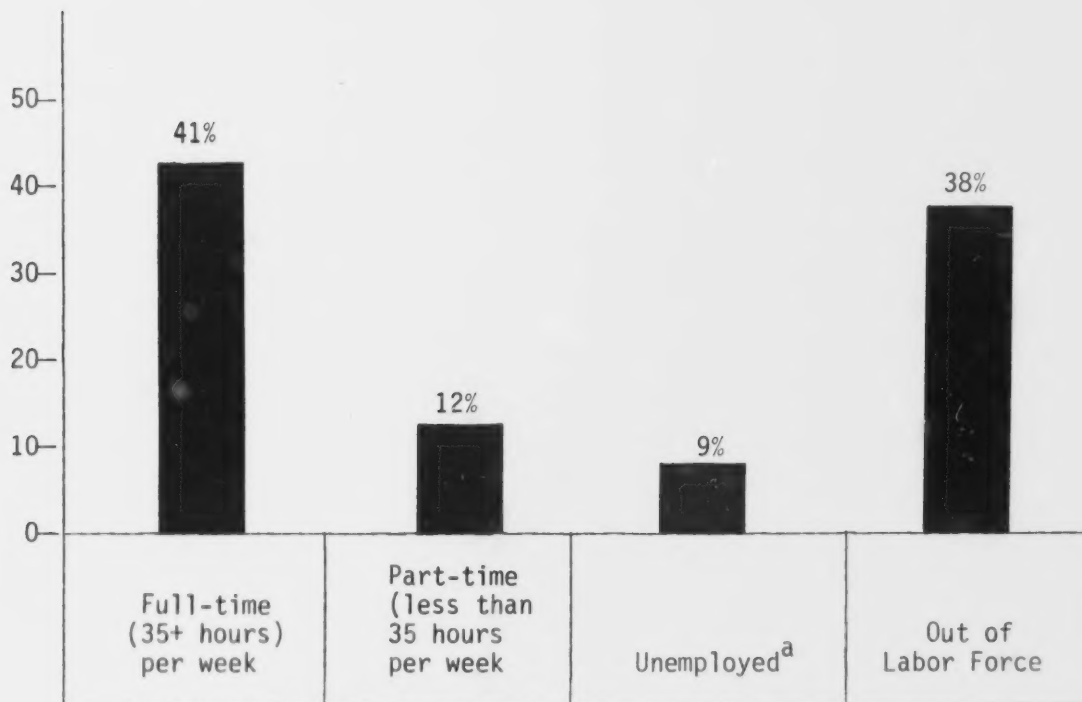
Figure 6.6 displays the employment status of the single mothers in the survey. Table 6.2 shows the types of jobs held by single mothers at the time of the survey. Forty-two percent are in clerical occupations; 21 percent are in service occupations; and 15 percent are in professional/technical occupations. Table 6.2 also shows that compared with all employed females in Ramsey County single mothers appear less likely to be employed in professional/technical positions.

Forty-one percent of single mothers are employed full-time, yet a large proportion of them (42 percent) have annual incomes of less than \$14,000. One in five of these full-time workers, moreover, hold jobs that do not provide fringe benefits, and half consider their opportunities for advancement as less than adequate. These low-income single mothers tend to be concentrated in lower-paying clerical and service occupations (e.g., child care workers and cooks) rather than in higher-paying professional positions (e.g., registered nurses and teachers). Although the vast majority have completed high school, they view lack of education or training as their chief obstacle to finding a better job. They are hampered, however, by insufficient resources (transportation, child care, and tuition) and inadequate time to pursue advanced degrees or training.

Twelve percent of single mothers work part-time, generally holding lower-status service jobs such as nursing aides, waitresses, and housekeepers. Only 31 percent hold jobs that provide fringe benefits. About half receive some financial support from AFDC, including the health care benefits from Medicaid or medical assistance. Part-time employment is more likely to be arranged by young single mothers, those with a preschool child at home, and those who need to adjust their working hours for compatibility with family responsibilities. About half of those working part-time would like to increase their work hours, but the kinds of jobs they hold are not likely to lead to stable, full-time employment.

Nine percent of all the single mothers surveyed were unemployed. That translates to an unemployment rate of 14.2 percent, nearly three times the average monthly unemployment rate of 4.9 in Ramsey County at the time of the

Figure 6.6. SINGLE MOTHERS: CURRENT EMPLOYMENT STATUS



^a Unemployed is defined as not working when surveyed but being available for work and making an effort to seek work during the four weeks before being surveyed. Those laid off from a job waiting to be recalled and those waiting to report to a job within 30 days were also considered unemployed.

Table 6.2. TYPES OF OCCUPATIONS AMONG SINGLE MOTHERS AND AMONG FEMALES
IN RAMSEY COUNTY

	SINGLE MOTHERS	RAMSEY COUNTY FEMALES
	1984 ^a	1980 ^b
	(N=205)	(N=106,577)
	Percent	Percent
Clerical	42	39
Service	21	15
Professional/Technical	15	26
Operatives	9	7
Sales	6	7
Crafts	3	2
Laborer	3	2
Total	100	100

^a Single mothers employed when surveyed

^b Employed females 16 years and over (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1983B)

survey.² These mothers have only minimal previous full-time work experience in low-paying, lower-status occupations. They view their "lack of experience" and the "lack of job openings" as the main reasons for being unable to find employment.

Out-of-the-Labor-Force AFDC Mothers Face Numerous Barriers to Self-Support

Thirty-eight percent of the single mothers were not actively seeking employment when surveyed and are considered to be out of the labor force. Nearly all of these mothers rely heavily on AFDC and non-cash benefits (medical assistance and food stamps) for their income. Similar to the unemployed, these mothers tend to have only minimal previous full-time work experience in low-paying service occupations that if obtained again would not likely provide adequate income or the fringe benefits they need to make the transition from public assistance to self-support possible or economically worthwhile. Given the additional noncash benefits of medical assistance and food stamps that they receive, they are probably better-off financially not working.

Those out of the labor force also face considerable additional barriers to employment (see **Table 6.3** and **Figure 6.7**). They frequently report, for example, that "lack of education," "lack of work experience," and "transportation problems" are barriers to holding a job. Less than a quarter of these mothers reported use of their own cars as their primary means of transportation. Thirty-nine percent of those with young children and 46 percent of those whose youngest child is age 6 or older have less than a high school education. "The lack of affordable day care" is another barrier cited by about a quarter of those with young children.

Mothers who are out of the labor force also frequently cite "family responsibilities," such as a child's chronic health problem, that hamper their employability. Their own health problems were also found to be barriers to employment for some mothers. A third of those with a preschool child, and 55 percent of those with school age children only, report having a serious physical health, mental health, or drug/alcohol problem that, according to the mothers, makes looking for work difficult and affects their ability to hold a job.

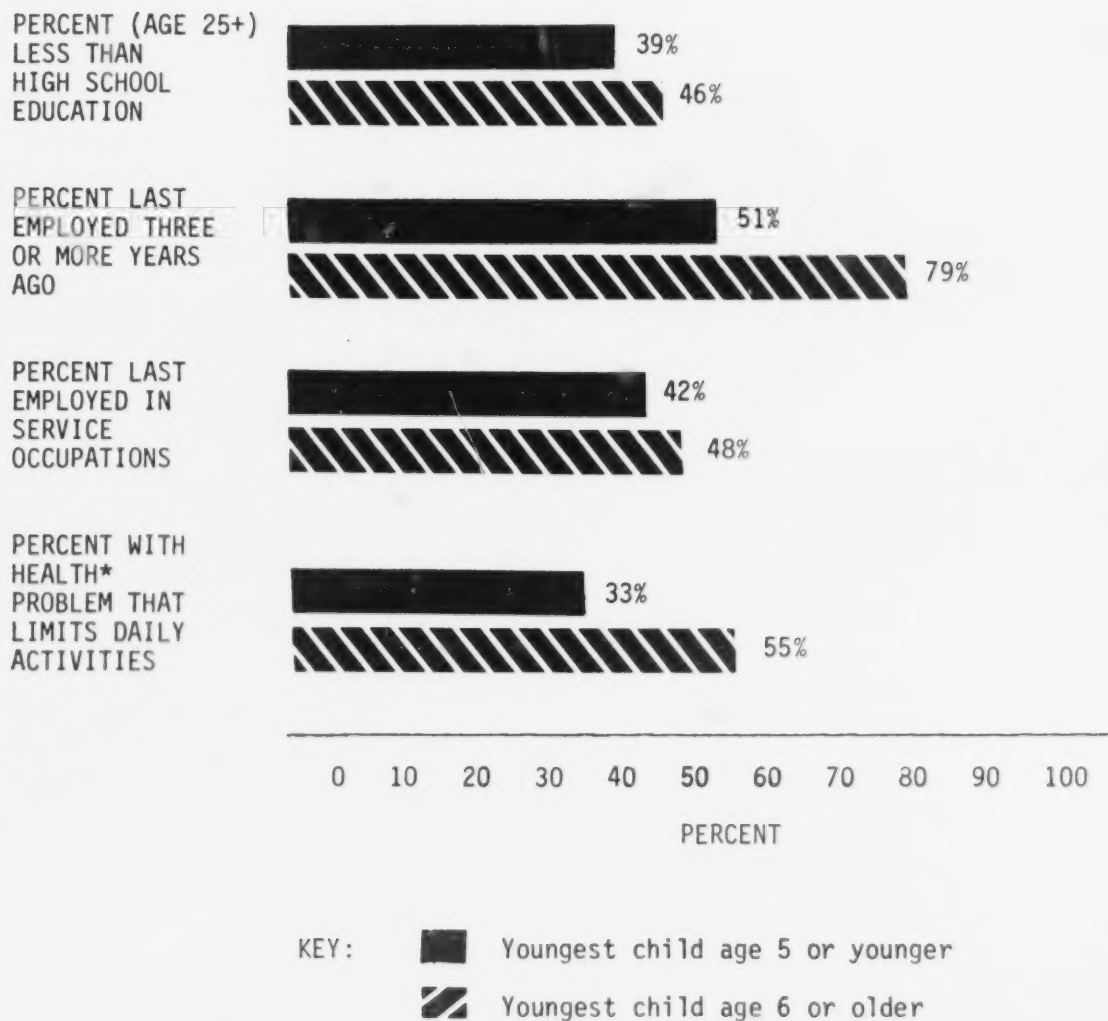
² The unemployment rate is based on only those who are in the labor force.

OUT-OF-LABOR-FORCE AFDC MOTHERS: REASONS NOT LOOKING FOR WORK
 Table 6.3. BY AGE OF YOUNGEST CHILD (MULTIPLE RESPONSES INCLUDED)

	Ages 0-5	Ages 6-17
	(N=61)	(N=36)
	Percent	Percent
Not enough education	41	44
Health problems	8	44
Not enough work experience	34	42
Family responsibilities	31	17
Transportation problems	28	14
Wants to stay home for children	26	19
Can't afford day care	23	6
Given up/discouraged	18	22
Welfare pays as much as work	15	17
Fears losing AFDC	16	6
Fears losing medical assistance	13	14
Can't find reliable day care	10	0
Going to school	8	8
Mental health problems	3	3

Note: Respondents read from a set list of possible reasons and were asked, "Which reasons explain why you are not looking for work?"

Figure 6.7. BARRIERS TO SELF-SUPPORT FOR AFDC MOTHERS BY AGE OF THEIR YOUNGEST CHILD



* Includes those reporting a physical health, mental health, or drug/alcohol problem

Finally, those with a preschool child also frequently cite "wanting to stay at home" as a reason for not working. Forty-five percent of those with a preschool child feel that childrearing responsibilities and commitments limit their ability to hold a job.

Lack of Child Support Contributes to Low Economic Status

Single mothers rely on two main sources of cash income. Most (60 percent) rely on their own employment for some income, including 42 percent for whom their own wages accounted for most or all of their family income in 1983. More than half of single mothers, however, also rely on AFDC for some financial support, including 43 percent for whom AFDC accounted for most or all of their family income in 1983. Those younger than age 25, racial minorities, never married and separated, and those with a preschool child at home are more likely than other single mothers to rely on AFDC as a principal source of income.

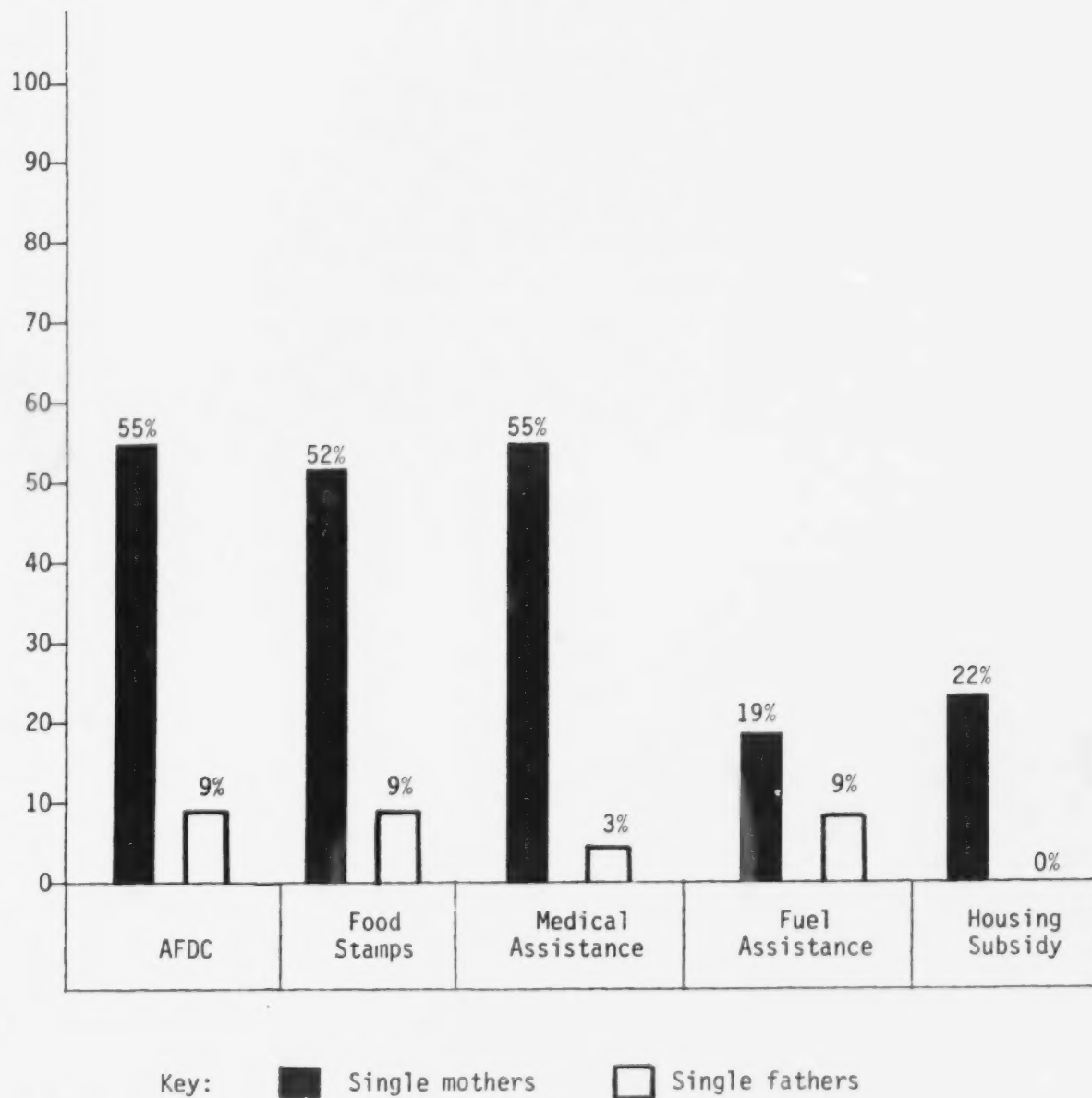
Reliance on other sources of cash income, including child support payments, tends to be small. Among those who do not receive AFDC and whose children have another parent still alive, for example, just half receive some of their income from child support payments. White and divorced single mothers, those who have never received AFDC, and those families in which the children spend any time at all with another parent are more likely to receive child support payments. For the other half, the collection of child support payments poses multiple problems including the unwillingness of the other parent to cooperate, his inability to pay, and the mother's desire to avoid direct dealings with her child's other parent.

Nearly two-thirds of single mothers and 15 percent of single fathers also received some noncash public assistance in the past year. Single mothers were significantly more likely than single fathers to receive housing subsidies, medical assistance, and food stamps. The proportions receiving fuel assistance in the past year were similar for mothers and fathers, however (see **Figure 6.8**).

IMPLICATIONS

Developing ways to improve the economic status of single mothers and to encourage their financial self-sufficiency has emerged as a central public policy issue involving single mothers. Income maintenance programs such as AFDC, the traditional approach to supporting low-income families, are under increasing pressure to cut costs and to reduce long-term dependence. The trend

PERCENTAGES OF SINGLE MOTHERS AND FATHERS RECEIVING AFDC AND NONCASH
Figure 6.8. BENEFITS IN PAST YEAR



is toward getting people off AFDC and into job training and employment. Tapping child support payments more effectively to supplement the low income of working single mothers as well as to reduce reliance on public assistance is also gaining greater public attention. The various policies and programs required to accomplish the goal of improving the economic status of single mothers, however, must come to terms with the issues raised by the findings of this survey.

First, it is important to recognize that not all single mothers are able to work and to support their families without public assistance. AFDC mothers are often encumbered by personal health and family problems, including having to care for a child in chronically poor health. For some mothers with preschool children, moreover, child rearing responsibilities and commitments take precedence over employment.

Second, preparation for employment is necessary as early as possible for AFDC mothers with one or two young children. The labor force participation of mothers with preschool children has increased strikingly in recent years. Exempting AFDC mothers with preschool children from training and work incentives diminishes their employment chances. These mothers need access to high-quality education and work experience in order to earn an adequate wage and to get off AFDC. AFDC policy cannot continue to expect that the commitment of mothers to their children always takes precedence over employment when the children are young, while at the same time expecting mothers without preschool children to become self-supporting after being minimally educated and out of the labor force for so many years.

Third, it is evident that job training, transportation, and adequate child care arrangements are key ingredients for improving the economic status of single mothers -- those in the labor force as well as those who are out of the labor force and able to work. Career counseling, training, and vocational assistance efforts to promote self-sufficiency must address other issues as well, however, most notably the need for basic education, non-traditional career guidance, and income supplementation. Many single mothers have less than a high school education or have not kept pace with technological change and need to learn new skills. Others have only minimal previous full-time work experience in lower-status, low-paying jobs that if obtained again will likely not provide opportunities for advancement or fringe benefits. Still others are already well established in lower-status, lower-paying jobs. It is important to recognize and address the limitations of single mothers' education and work

experience as well as the limitations of the kinds of jobs that single mothers traditionally hold and seek. Single mothers cannot expect to improve their economic status through individual efforts alone. Improving their economic status would seem to require, in the short-term, obtaining supplements to their own low earnings and, in the long-term, fundamental changes in the labor market itself.

Finally, it is clear that, at present, child support payments provide only a minimum level of financial support to some families, most often benefiting a particularly better-off group of single mothers (e.g., White, divorced, and those never on AFDC). While the vast majority of single mothers need to more effectively tap child support payments as a means to supplement their own low incomes, the evidence here suggests that attempts to increase the other parents' contribution to the family income of single mothers would have to overcome several obstacles, including the other parents' unwillingness to cooperate. Maintaining contact between the children and their father appears to be an important ingredient for increasing the likelihood of receiving child support payments. Such an approach needs to be tempered, however, by the fact that some single mothers do not want their child's other parent to be involved in the life of their family. For these mothers, a nonvoluntary, automatic system of child support would appear to be the most beneficial.

MEETING THE BASIC NEEDS OF SINGLE PARENT FAMILIES

This section reviews the key study findings and their implications in the areas of housing; physical health and medical care; material necessities such as food, clothing, and furniture; transportation; and child care.

HOUSING

Most single parent families (59 percent) reside in multi-family dwellings, including more than a quarter who reside in apartment buildings with five or more units. About two-thirds of single parents rent, considerably more than the one-fifth who rent found among all family households with children in Ramsey County, according to the 1980 Census.

Most single parents find their current housing suitable for their family's needs. About a quarter, however, particularly those residing in apartments, are dissatisfied with their housing. Most often, these parents describe their housing as "too small" for their needs or "in poor condition."

Twenty percent of single parents receive public rental assistance. Racial minorities, those who are never married or separated, and AFDC recipients are more likely than other single mothers to receive housing subsidies. Among single mother renters who do not receive such assistance, about two-thirds pay more than 30 percent of their family income for housing. Renters and low-income single mothers pay proportionately more of their total family income for housing than do home owners and higher-income single mothers (see Figure 6.9).

PHYSICAL HEALTH AND MEDICAL CARE

Most single parents report being in good physical health, and nearly all have been able to get needed medical care in the past year. Almost half of the single parents relied on Medicaid or medical assistance to pay for their medical services. Another two-fifths are covered by private health plans or insurance.

About a fifth of single parents, however, are not covered by public or private health insurance and pay for medical care with cash. The findings suggest that these single parents may have the least access to needed medical care, principally hampered by the cost of medical services. They tend to hold lower status, low paying service jobs that do not provide health care benefits, but their incomes are not low enough to qualify for medical assistance. These self-supporting, working poor also tend to lack the work experience or skills they need to obtain higher paying jobs or the kinds of jobs that include needed health insurance benefits.

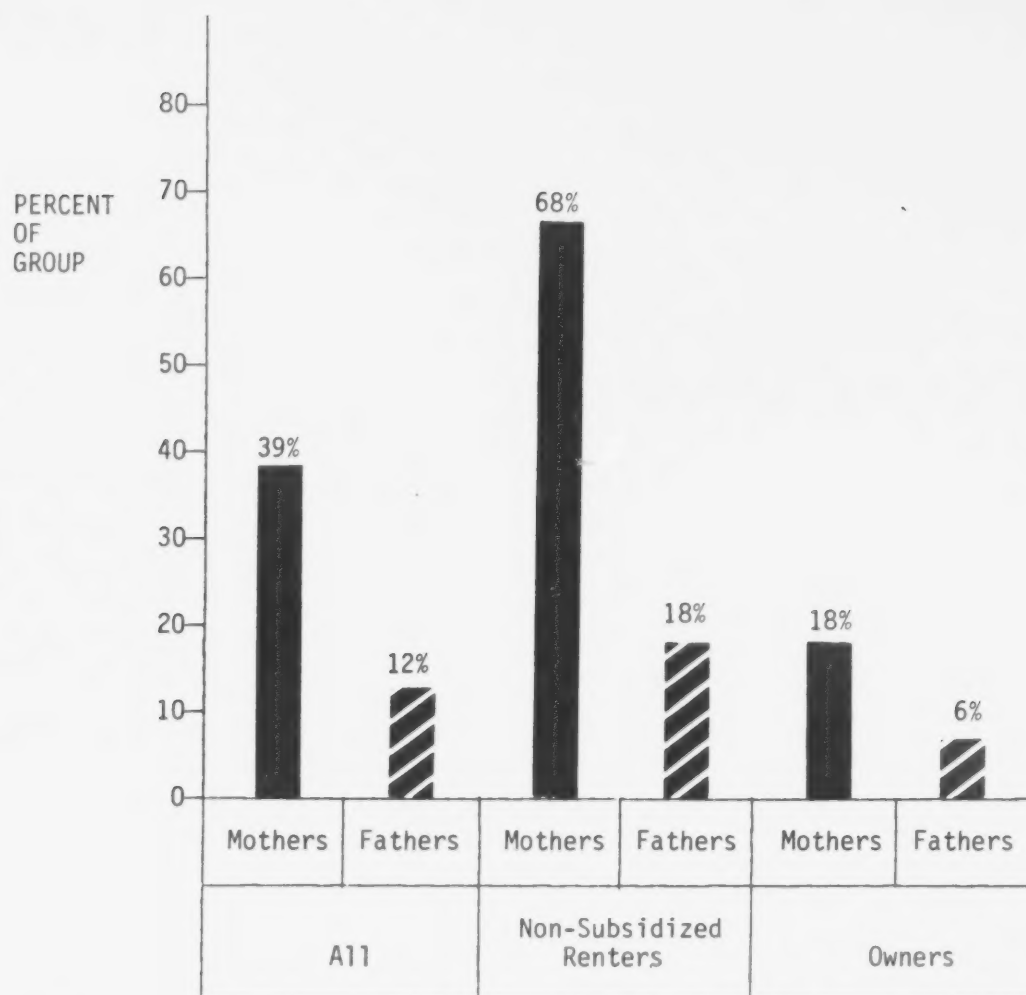
About a fifth of the single parents, moreover, reported having health problems (such as back pain and high blood pressure) that interfered with their daily activities. Older single mothers (age 35 and older) and those who were unemployed or out of the labor force were more likely than other single parents to report having health problems that seriously limited their daily activities (see Figure 6.10).

MATERIAL NECESSITIES

Going Without Necessities

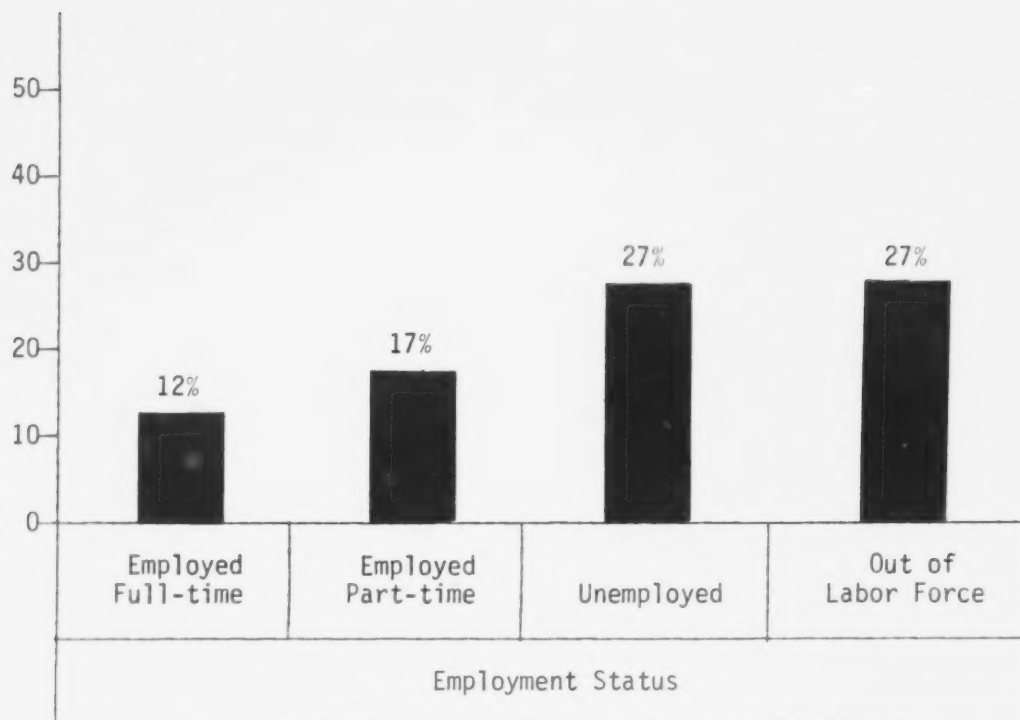
Fifty-four percent of single parents, including 57 percent of the single mothers and 24 percent of the single fathers, reported not having sufficient money in the past year to provide for one or more material necessities. In contrast, a recent, general survey of households in the Twin Cities

Figure 6.9. PROPORTION PAYING MORE THAN 30 PERCENT OF FAMILY INCOME FOR HOUSING COSTS



Note: Proportions are based on 1984 rents or mortgage payments and 1983 income data. While the figures should not be taken as precise, they do provide useful approximations of housing costs relative to income.

Figure 6.10. PERCENTAGE OF SINGLE MOTHERS REPORTING A PHYSICAL HEALTH PROBLEM OR PHYSICAL HANDICAP, BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS



metropolitan area found that 21 percent of all family households with children in Ramsey County went without one or more necessities in the past year because of lack of money (Minnesota Center for Social Research, 1985).

The items that single mothers were most likely to report going without were essential clothes (28 percent), adequate food (26 percent), and essential furniture (20 percent). (Note that these findings are based on respondents' own judgments of what is "essential" or "adequate." Independent observations were not made.) Smaller proportions of single mothers went without dental care (16 percent), adequate heat (16 percent), telephones (15 percent), and medical care (8 percent).

Among single mothers, those who were unemployed or out of the labor force, those receiving AFDC, and those with annual incomes of less than \$14,000 were significantly more likely than other single mothers to have gone without at least one necessity in the past year, particularly such necessities as essential clothes and adequate food. Going without dental care, in contrast, was more likely for single mothers who were in the labor force and for those who were not AFDC recipients.

Seeking Help for Necessities

Among the single parents who reported going without at least one necessity in the past year because of lack of money, 58 percent sought help for one or more necessities during the past year, most often from a human service agency, the county welfare department, a neighborhood church, or a community center. They also sought help, but less frequently, from family and friends. These 133 single parents most frequently sought help for food (59 percent), followed by clothes (31 percent), heat (30 percent), furniture (22 percent), dental care (10 percent), and telephones (6 percent). Seventy-nine percent of the single parents who sought help obtained the help they felt they needed.

Taking into account the single parents who were lacking necessities but who sought and received help, the proportion of single parents going without at least one necessity declined from 54 percent to 30 percent. Going without adequate food dropped from 25 percent to 9 percent. Going without adequate heat dropped from 15 percent to 8 percent. In contrast, the proportions going without essential clothes, essential furniture, dental care, telephones, and medical care showed only small reductions.

TRANSPORTATION

About half of the single mothers, contrasted with nearly all of the single fathers, most commonly use their own cars for transportation. About a quarter of the single mothers most often use public transportation (MTC buses). Thirty-nine percent of the single mothers have at least some transportation problems that limit their own or their children's activities. AFDC recipients and those with annual incomes of less than \$8,000 are more likely than other single mothers to have transportation difficulties. The activities most often affected by transportation problems are "recreational activities" (15 percent), "grocery shopping" (7 percent), and "medical appointments" (6 percent). Seventy-eight percent of those with transportation difficulties received help with their problems, most often getting rides from friends or family.

CHILD CARE

About half (46 percent) of the single mothers who have at least one child age 12 or younger use child care on a regular basis. About three-quarters of these mothers are in the labor force, including 52 percent who work full-time.

A relative, most often an older sibling, caring for the child in the child's home is the most frequently arranged form of child care (29 percent). See **Table 6.4**. Children ages 2 or younger tend most often to be at home with a relative or a non-relative. Those ages 3 to 5 tend to be about equally cared for at home or in preschool. Children 6 to 12 tend most frequently to be cared for in their own homes, but appear more likely than younger children to be cared for at the home of a non-relative.

Most single mothers (84 percent) express satisfaction with their child care arrangements. Overall, 46 percent of the children are cared for without charge to their mothers. Care by relatives and in-home care are more likely than care by unrelated providers and out-of-home care to be provided free of charge to the mother.

Reasons for Not Using Child Care

About a quarter (24 percent) of the single mothers who have at least one child age 12 or younger are in the labor force but do not use child care on a regular basis. These mothers cited multiple reasons for not using child care. More than half arrange their schedules to be "at home when their children are home." Forty percent believe that their "children (all age 8 or older) are old

CHILDREN OF SINGLE MOTHERS: PRIMARY CHILD CARE
Table 6.4. ARRANGEMENTS FOR CHILDREN AGES 12 OR YOUNGER^a

Type of Arrangement	Percent (N=189 Children)
Care in child's home with relative	29
Care in non-relative's home	16
Care in child's home with non-relative	12
Care in relative's home	11
Licensed family home	11
Preschool	10
Group care center	10
Other arrangements	2
Total	100

^a Only those children of single mothers currently in child care are included in the table.

enough to care for themselves." Eight percent "cannot afford" child care; 5 percent find child care "unreliable;" and 3 percent "do not trust" child care.

Child Care as a Barrier to Employment

About a quarter of the 61 AFDC mothers interested in employment but who needed child care for a preschool child reported their inability to afford child care as a reason for not looking for work. About a third of the 67 AFDC mothers who wanted to pursue further education or training but who needed child care for a preschool child cited the lack of reliable or affordable day care as the most likely obstacle.

IMPLICATIONS

The findings reveal evidence of the financial hardships of single mothers, particularly those more likely to have lower economic status -- the never married and mothers of preschool children. It is the single mothers who can least afford to pay for housing, for example, who tend to pay higher proportions of their incomes for housing. They also may be paying more than they can afford for housing that lacks adequate space or that is in poor condition. It is AFDC mothers and those with lower incomes who are also more likely to be going without basic material necessities and to be having transportation difficulties that limit their families' activities. It is the self-supporting working poor, on the other hand, who are most likely to lack medical insurance and to find medical care inaccessible.

The findings also show how vital the various noncash benefit programs are to single parent families. The needs for food, heat, and medical care among single parent families are, on balance, largely met after parents seek help for such items. (Indeed, extending medical coverage to the uninsured self-supporting working poor would make medical care accessible to virtually all single parent families.) But if those needs are, for the most part, managed sufficiently with help from outside their families, the needs not covered sufficiently by public assistance programs are not being managed as well by single parent families. Housing stands out as one area not covered sufficiently by public assistance programs. Nearly 4 out of 10 single mothers lack affordable housing. The need for essential clothing and furniture by about a fifth of single parent families also deserves attention.

Finally, the findings show the important role that informal support from family and friends play in meeting some of the basic needs of single parents.

The rides provided to those with transportation problems are one example. Most notable, however, is the child care provided, free of charge, to many single mothers in their own homes. Public policy discussions of child care generally favor unrelated, out-of-home, and regulated providers. Broadening public discussions to incorporate the full range of child care alternatives would appear to be the most responsive to the preferences and practices of single mothers.

CHILDREN IN SINGLE PARENT FAMILIES

Most families (80 percent) have one or two children, including about half that have only one child. The children are mostly school-age: 22 percent are age 4 or younger, 28 percent 5 to 9, 32 percent 10 to 14, and 18 percent 15 to 17. The majority (69 percent) of single parents live on their own with only their minor children. Others live with their own parents, siblings or other relatives (16 percent), have at least one 18 year old child at home (11 percent), or share housing with friends or non-relatives (4 percent).

Although the majority of single parents do not have any serious concerns about how their children are faring, over a third of those with at least one child age 5 or older have serious concerns about learning, emotional/behavioral, or physical health problems of one or more of their children. Parents most frequently cited concerns about their children's emotional/behavioral problems (e.g., not getting along with family members, trouble controlling temper or anger, not following the rules of the family, or not doing household chores as necessary), but children with problems in one area often had problems in other areas as well.

Likewise, most single parents believe that child-rearing poses little or no trouble. Getting help from the children's absent parent and handling the children's relationship with the absent parent were the main child-rearing problems reported by single parents (see Table 6.5). Nevertheless, most single parents whose children have contact with an absent parent are satisfied with the way the children themselves get along with their other parent.

It is important to keep in mind, though, that in 40 percent of the families with at least one living absent parent, the children have no contact with an absent parent. The majority of single parents in those families, moreover, find that arrangement to their satisfaction. Among single mothers, children are less likely to spend time with an absent father if their mother is

PERCENTAGE OF SINGLE PARENTS HAVING TROUBLE
Table 6.5. WITH PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP ITEMS

ITEM ^a	PERCENT REPORTING AT LEAST A MODERATE AMOUNT OF TROUBLE
1. The help from an absent parent in raising children	41
2. Handling relationship between children and their other parent	23
3. Dealing with problems of raising children	23
4. Handling discipline and punishment	22
5. Providing appropriate recreational and play activities	19
6. Delegating household chores	18
7. The respect that children show you	17
8. Helping children with their schoolwork	16
9. The way children are turning out	16
10. Handling concern about family loss	15
11. Communication with children	14
12. Advising children about education or career plans	13
13. Providing religious or spiritual experiences	11
14. Teaching children about sex	8
15. Protecting children from physical and/or sexual abuse	8
16. Providing children with love and affection	5

^a Items 1 and 2 include only families in which one or more absent parents are alive and spend some time with a child. Items 3-16 include only families with children ages 5-17.

never married, is a member of a racial minority group, or has less than a high school education.

Finally, the findings suggest that single mothers who lived with another adult (such as a sibling, parent, or roommate) rather than on their own with their children, those who had little or no trouble with the child-rearing help that they got from an absent parent, and those with higher levels of self-esteem are less likely to have a child with serious behavior problems. There were no indications that mothers' employment status was linked to any problems their children might be having.

IMPLICATIONS

It is important to recognize that multiple problems may exist in some families and that any programming to deal with the problems children might be having should be directed towards the family, including the absent parent whenever possible, not just the child. For the child's sake, moreover, custodial and noncustodial parents must be encouraged to develop a cooperative child-rearing arrangement. Finally, our data also suggest that the presence of an alternative caretaker (e.g., adult roommate, grandparent, aunt or uncle) in the home may have a positive effect on children.

Even though most children in single parent families do have two living parents, it is evident that many children in single parent families are, in fact, raised and supported by only one parent. Moreover, it is those single mothers least able to support themselves and their children -- never married mothers and those with less than a high school education -- who are the most likely to parent singly, their children having no contact with an absent parent. It is incumbent on a community concerned about its children to do all that it can to encourage the continued involvement of the absent parent in the obligations, including the financial obligations, of child raising. It is equally important, however, to be prepared to aid and support those families who lack the support of another parent and whose sole wage earner lacks the resources and the skills to meet her family's basic needs.

MENTAL HEALTH AND SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT

SELF-ESTEEM AND MASTERY

Most single parents were found to have relatively high self-esteem and feelings of mastery. However, lower levels of self-esteem and lesser feelings

of mastery are more likely among mothers who are out of the labor force, who are on AFDC, and who have low incomes. Comparatively, single parents age 19 to 34 were found to have slightly lower self-esteem and feelings of mastery than the general population in this age range in Ramsey County (Mueller and Cooper, 1984).

MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS

Fifteen percent of the single parents reported that, during the past year, mental health or emotional problems had interfered with their daily activities. Depression, situational stress, and anxiety are frequently mentioned types of emotional problems. Over two-thirds of those with a mental health problem say their activities are limited by the problem at least once a week, including a quarter whose activities are limited daily. The majority (81 percent) of those reporting a problem tried to do something about it, usually by seeking help from a mental health clinic or professional.

It appears that mental health problems might be more likely among single mothers who are unemployed or out of the labor force and among those on AFDC. Mothers with mental health problems also tend to have lower levels of self-esteem and mastery.

Mental Health Problems Linked to Physical Health Problems

Mental health and physical health problems are also related. Single mothers who rate their health as "fair" or "poor" are much more likely than other single mothers to report a mental health problem, and mothers with mental health problems are more likely to report having a physical health problem.

Mother's Poor Mental Health Linked to Child-Rearing Problems

Mothers (with at least one child age 5 to 17) who are seriously concerned about the learning, emotional/ behavioral, or physical health problems of one or more children are more likely than other mothers to report a mental health problem (30 percent compared with 10 percent) and to have lower self-esteem. Mental health problems are also more likely among mothers who have a child with a behavioral problem than among other mothers (31 percent vs. 12 percent), as are lower levels of self-esteem.

Poor Mental Health Linked to Weak Social Support

Seventy-nine percent of respondents report that there is at least one person (a friend, parent, or other relative) on whom they can always depend for help and support. Fifteen percent of single fathers and 21 percent of single mothers report that there is no one on whom they can depend. There also is a small proportion (13 percent) of single parents who report that, during the past twelve months, they had a problem with having no one to talk to openly about a personal concern.

Single parents who say that there is no one on whom they can always count for help are more likely to report having a mental health or emotional problem and to have lower levels of self-esteem. Those parents who report having no one to talk to about personal concerns are more likely to have a mental health problem (38 percent vs. 12 percent), to have lower levels of self-esteem, and to have lesser feelings of control.

SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT

Seventy-two percent of single parents report being satisfied with their lives as single persons. Fifty-four percent believe that remarrying or finding a partner is of little or no importance. Thirty-nine percent are currently romantically involved. However, 23 percent report having problems with dating or companionship, and 16 percent believe that "loneliness" is the biggest disadvantage of being single.

Single mothers who reported having mental health problems were less likely to be satisfied with their lives as single persons. Satisfaction was also found to be linked to higher levels of self-esteem and mastery.

IMPLICATIONS

Overall, the mental health of single parents appears good. Most have relatively high self-esteem and feelings of control over their lives. Eighty-five percent say that mental health or emotional problems do not interfere with their daily lives.

Health care and mental health professionals and clinicians, however, should be sensitive to the interrelated problems facing some single parents, including financial difficulties, child-rearing problems, health problems, and lack of social support. Programming to deal with the problems of single parents should be comprehensive in nature, taking into account that problems in one area may affect or be affected by problems in other areas.

Finally, these data point to the importance of early intervention and treatment for those with mental health and/or physical health problems in order to avoid the long-term consequences, including the economic consequences, associated with such restrictive problems. Although these data cannot determine cause and effect, it may be that improving the economic status of single mothers would help to prevent these debilitating problems from ever developing.

CHILDBEARING AND ECONOMIC SELF-SUFFICIENCY

TEENAGE CHILDBEARING

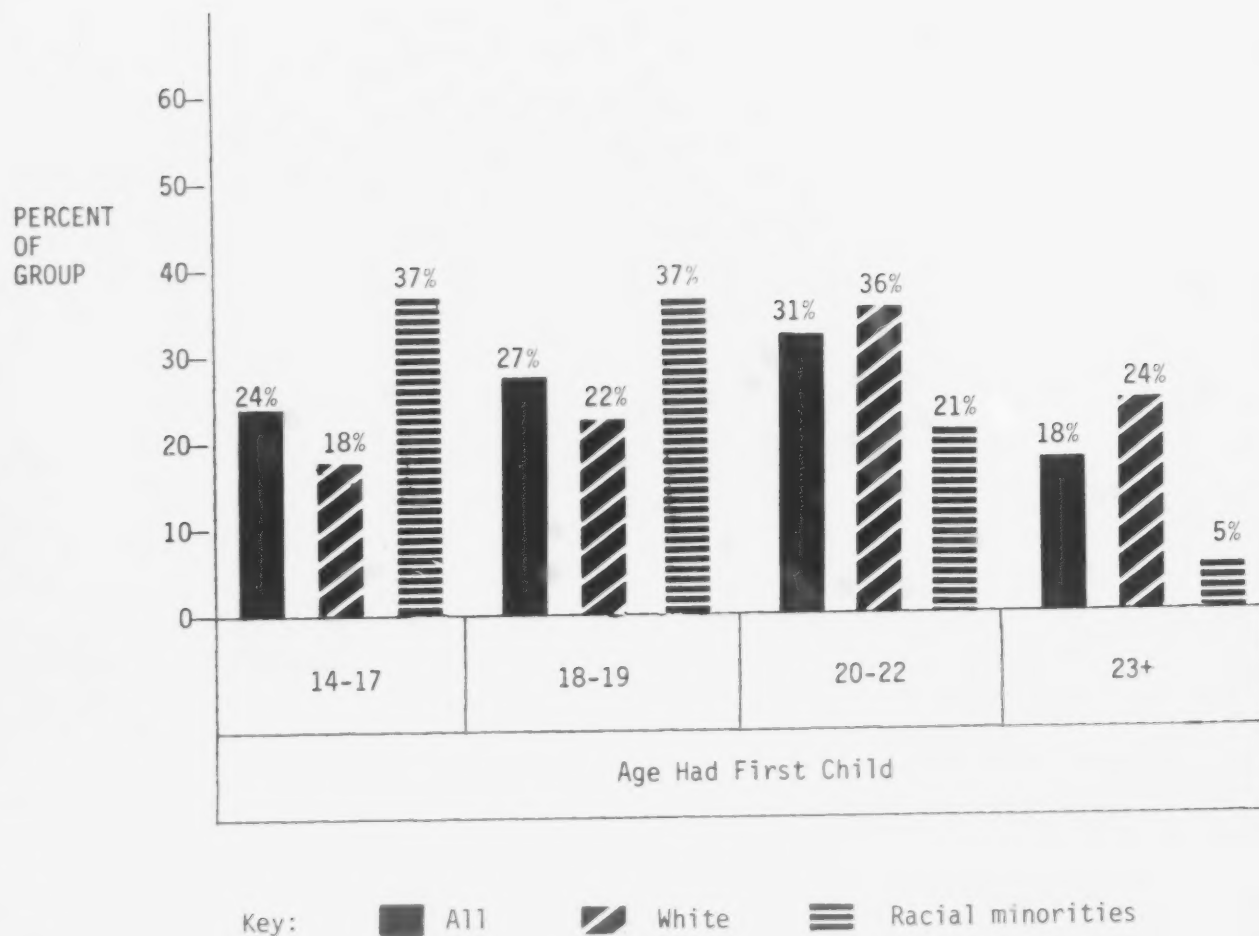
The findings reported in this section refer to single mothers who were age 34 or younger at the time the survey was conducted. The age that these single mothers first gave birth ranged from 14 to 29. Half became parents as teenagers, including a quarter who were age 17 or younger. Racial minorities (see **Figure 6.11**), the never married, and those not raised by both natural parents were more likely than other single mothers to be teenage at first birth. Those whose own mothers were teenage mothers were also more likely themselves to be teenage mothers.

Compared with women ages 19 to 34, single mothers in the same age range are having their first child at younger ages. The average age of first birth among single mothers in this survey was 20.0, compared with an average age of first birth of 22.6 found among all females ages 19 to 34 in the sample from the Wilder Foundation's study of young adults (Mueller and Cooper, 1984).

Teenage motherhood was found to be associated with low educational levels, which made economic self-sufficiency less likely. Nearly half of those ages 25 to 34 at the time of this survey who became parents at ages 14 to 17 and one-third of those who became parents at ages 18 or 19 have less than a high school education.

Teenage motherhood was also found to be associated with economic dependency. Single mothers who became parents as teenagers, especially those who were unmarried at the time, were more likely to be AFDC recipients when surveyed. Moreover, most (83 percent) never married mothers with more than one child were on AFDC when they had their last child, and nearly all (96 percent) were on AFDC after they had their last child. The findings also show that among single mothers with preschool children, those who became parents as

Figure 6.11. SINGLE MOTHERS^a: AGE HAD FIRST CHILD BY RACE



^a Includes only those age 34 or younger at the time the survey was conducted

teenagers were less likely than older first-time parents to get off AFDC once on.

Teenage motherhood, however, was not found to be linked to any behavioral, learning, or health problems that children might have. Nor were those mothers who were teenage at first birth found to have more health problems later in life than those who delayed childbearing to age 20 or older.

CHILDBEARING AND MARRIAGE

About a third of the single mothers are never married; 42 percent of these women have two or more children. Thirty-five percent of the divorced, separated, and widowed single mothers (ages 16 to 34) had children while single -- either before marriage or after becoming a single parent. Unmarried childbearing is more likely among the young and racial minorities. Among the never married, those with two or more children are more likely than those with only one child to be not working and to be on AFDC (see **Figure 6.12**).

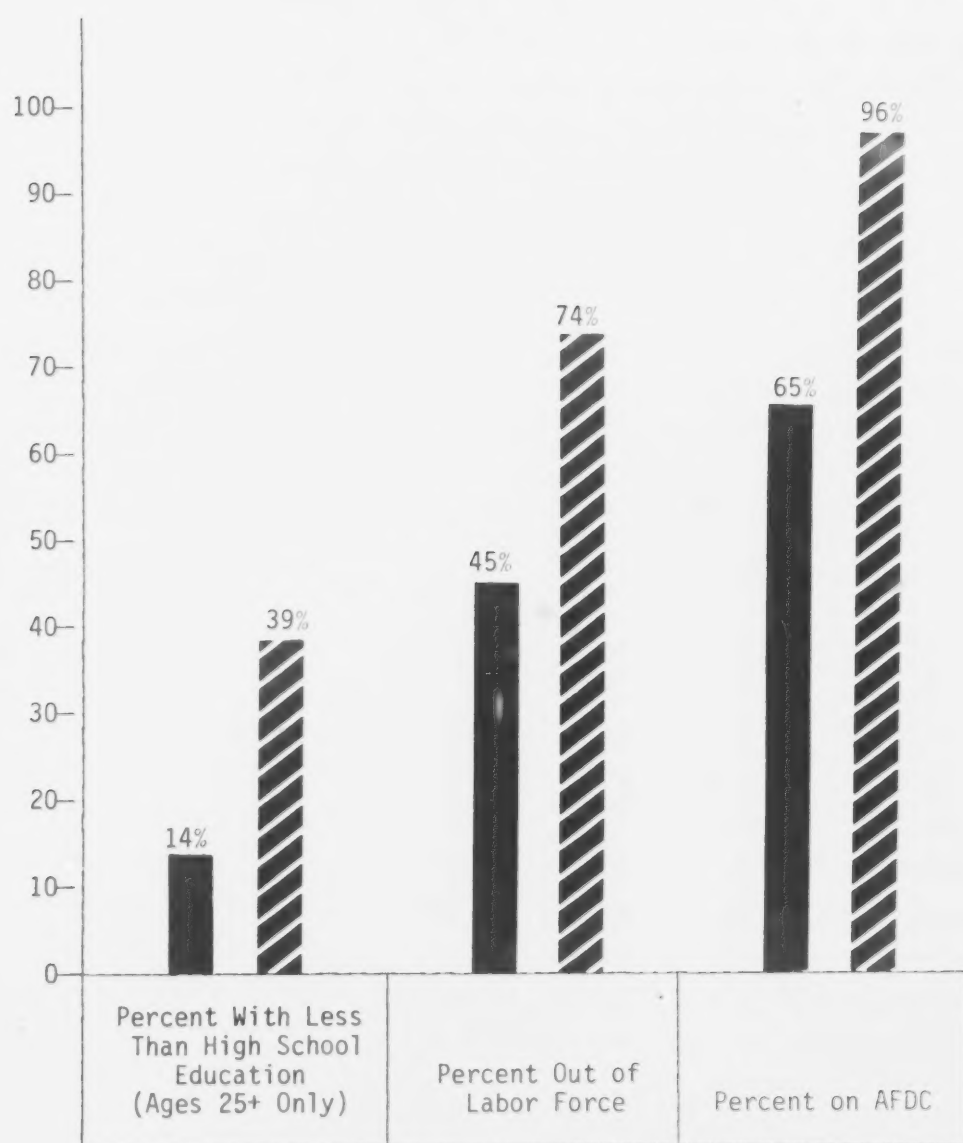
IMPLICATIONS

The ideas that social welfare programs (e.g., AFDC) provide an incentive to teenage and unmarried women to have children in order to achieve a cash income of their own and that AFDC recipients have additional children to increase their public assistance benefits have wide popular appeal (Gilder, 1983; Greene, 1981; Kramer, 1983; Murray, 1984). The findings from this survey cannot speak to the causes of teenage and unmarried childbearing. The findings do illustrate, however, the adverse consequences of teenage and unmarried motherhood, including the strong association between teenage childbearing, especially unmarried teenage childbearing, and low educational attainment as well as economic dependency.

These findings are consistent with other studies that have found early childbearing results in welfare dependency (Moore and Burt, 1982) and that persistent welfare dependency is associated with the continued presence of preschool children in the home (Duncan, 1984). But these studies also point out that no evidence can be found that AFDC provides a financial incentive for childbearing or that the childbearing is in any way planned.

The adversity associated with teenage childbearing and the benefits of fewer children point to the centrality of family planning and pregnancy prevention as a means to check the economic disadvantages of single parent families. It is essential to ensure that all teenagers understand how

NEVER MARRIED SINGLE MOTHERS: CURRENT ECONOMIC
Figure 6.12. CHARACTERISTICS BY NUMBER OF CHILDREN



Key:  One child
 Two or more children

childbearing will affect their lives and that they receive the incentive to delay childbearing to a more mature age. To be effective, moreover, family planning services for teenagers must consist of more than health and human sexuality education and the distribution of contraceptives. Programming to deal with pregnancy prevention should also include early identification of those at greatest risk of teenage childbearing such as the daughters of single mothers, those whose own mothers were teen mothers, and racial minority students, particularly Black teens and pre-teens. These groups should be provided additional encouragement, support, and intensive counseling to prevent pregnancy. Programming should also include systematic follow-up and counseling to encourage responsible social and sexual behavior. Finally, teenagers who are not sexually active should be supported in that choice. A discussion of values and choices with parental involvement should be part of sex education.

The findings also indicate the need to support and develop multi-faceted programs to assist teen mothers to complete their educations and to enter occupations that make getting and staying off AFDC more possible. That means educational programs to upgrade the basic education of young mothers; more help with child care for student mothers; attention to the interrelated issues of child-rearing, finances, and mental health that may be more problematic for adolescent mothers; and support and encouragement to pursue college educations and "non-traditional" occupations.

CONCLUSIONS

The low economic status of single parent families deserves great community attention. For human service purposes, discussions about single parent families should bear in mind, however, that single parents are more diverse demographically and economically than is commonly acknowledged. To reach the most economically vulnerable groups, funds, services, and attention should be targeted towards never married mothers, mothers with young children, racial minority single mothers, and those who had their first child as teenagers. These single mothers tend to be ill-equipped educationally and vocationally to support themselves and their children and are among those most likely to lack the support and involvement of the absent father.

Advancing the educational status of single mothers is central to improving their socioeconomic status. Low educational attainment is associated with minimal labor force participation, lower-status occupations, and subsistence

level incomes. New single mothers should be counseled about the benefits of delaying further childbearing; encouraged to pursue skills that make attaining higher-status, higher-paying employment more possible; and prepared to function as responsible parents and self-sufficient heads of households. The schools could take the lead to work toward preventing many of the severe problems of single parents. It may even be that teenage childbearing and its adverse economic consequences could be prevented by identifying and helping students in academic trouble as early as possible.

Finally, the most severe problems of single parents in such areas as employment, child-rearing, and health are fundamentally inseparable from community-wide problems and inequities, albeit perhaps more pronounced in a group of people that is preponderantly female and disproportionately racial minorities. Remedies to the employment needs of many single parents, for example, require fundamental and long-term changes in the economic structure of society (e.g., wage rates, occupational segregation, and flexible work scheduling) beyond the influence of individual efforts. Solving the most difficult child-rearing problems requires a cooperation between custodial and noncustodial parents that is often unrealistic following divorce or relationship breakdown. The serious physical and mental health problems that limit the daily functioning of some single parents tend to be interrelated and linked to their low economic status and to a general lack of help and support from family and friends. Much can be done by health and human service providers to alleviate the individual symptoms. For all families with children to be adequately supported and provided the opportunity to lead healthy and productive lives, however, these wider intractable problems must also be addressed.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SINGLE PARENT FAMILIES:

SINGLE FATHERS -- A SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT

In 1980, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, 2 percent of all families with dependent children and 10 percent of the single parent families in the United States were headed by single fathers, representing an 81 percent increase in the number of single father families since 1970 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1985). Ramsey County contained 1,511 single father families in 1980, representing 3 percent of all families with dependent children and 12 percent of the single parent families. The number of single father families in Ramsey County increased 122 percent since 1970 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1971, 1982B).

The following analysis of 97 single custodial fathers is based on data from the general sample of single parents (34 respondents) and from a supplemental non-probability sample of single fathers (63 respondents). These latter fathers were contacted using various methods including referrals from other respondents, study advisory committee members, and community contacts as well as by articles in various newspapers asking for volunteers to call us. The fathers in the supplemental sample had to meet the same criteria as those in the general sample to be eligible for the survey. They had to be Ramsey County residents, to have been single parents for at least 12 months, and to live at least half the time with one or more children age 17 or younger. Persons cohabiting and married persons whose spouses were absent because of military, educational, medical, or business reasons were excluded.

A comparison of the fathers from the general sample and the supplemental sample in **Tables 7.1** and **7.2** reveals that the fathers in the supplemental sample appear less likely to be separated and more likely to be divorced, more likely to be employed full-time, and more likely to be college graduates than do the fathers in the general sample. The two groups, however, did not differ significantly by demographic characteristics, education, employment status, or income.

Throughout this examination of single custodial fathers, comparisons are drawn between the characteristics of the 97 single fathers and the

Table 7.1. DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GENERAL AND SUPPLEMENTAL SAMPLES OF SINGLE FATHERS

	General (N=34) Percent	Supplemental (N=63) Percent
<u>AGE</u>		
16-24	5.9	0.0
25-34	26.5	28.6
35-44	38.2	50.8
45+	29.4	20.6
Total	100.0	100.0
<u>RACE</u>		
White	91.2	90.5
Other	8.8	9.5
Total	100.0	100.0
<u>MARITAL STATUS</u>		
Divorced	61.8	81.0
Never married	8.8	6.3
Separated	23.5	9.5
Widowed	5.9	3.2
Total	100.0	100.0
<u>AGE OF YOUNGEST</u>		
0-5	23.5	23.8
6-17	76.5	76.2
Total	100.0	100.0

Note: Significance test for age (16-34, 35-44, 45+):
chi square = 1.57; df = 2; NS

Significance test for race: corrected chi
square = 0; df = 1; NS

Significance test for marital status: chi
square = 4.68; df = 3; NS

Significance test for age of youngest child:
corrected chi square = 0; df = 1; NS

EDUCATIONAL AND ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GENERAL
Table 7.2. AND SUPPLEMENTAL SAMPLES OF SINGLE FATHERS

	General	Supplemental
	Percent	Percent
<u>EDUCATION (Ages 25+ Only)</u>	<u>(N=32)</u>	<u>(N=63)</u>
Less than high school	12.5	3.2
High school graduate	43.8	27.0
Some college	25.0	33.3
College graduate	18.8	36.5
Total	100.0	100.0
<u>EMPLOYMENT STATUS</u>	<u>(N=34)</u>	<u>(N=63)</u>
Full-time	70.6	87.3
Part-time	5.9	7.9
Unemployed	11.8	3.2
Out of labor force	11.8	1.6
Total	100.0	100.0
<u>ANNUAL INCOME</u>	<u>(N=34)</u>	<u>(N=62)</u>
< \$8,000	14.7	4.8
\$8,000-\$13,999	11.8	11.3
\$14,000-\$21,999	23.5	24.2
\$22,000-\$29,999	23.6	25.8
\$30,000+	26.4	33.9
Total	100.0	100.0

Note: Significance test for education: chi square = 7.42;
df = 3; NS

Significance test for employment status: chi
square = 7.96; df = 3; NS

Significance test for income (< \$22,000 vs. \$22,000+):
corrected chi square = .49; df = 1; NS

characteristics of the 387 single mothers from the general sample. If there is a bias in the study sample of single fathers, it is likely to be toward those who are better-off economically. If there is a bias in the study sample of single mothers, it tends toward the lower-income single parent families and those who are worse-off economically. Because of these possible biases, the economic differences reported in this chapter may be larger than actually exist between the two groups.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF SINGLE FATHERS

AGE, RACE, AND MARITAL STATUS

Table 7.3 compares various demographic characteristics of single fathers and single mothers. Two percent of the 97 single fathers were age 24; 28 percent were 25 to 34; 46 percent were ages 35 to 44, and 24 percent were ages 45 to 61. Single fathers tended to be older than single mothers. Single fathers had a mean age of 38.7, compared with the mean age of 33.6 for single mothers.

Among first-time divorced and separated single parents, single fathers became single parents at a mean age of 34.5. Among those who have been single parents just once, divorced and separated single fathers tended to become single parents at older ages than divorced and separated single mothers.¹

Ninety-one percent of the single fathers were White. Blacks and Hispanics each constituted 4 percent of the sample. Single fathers were significantly less likely than single mothers to be racial minorities (see Table 7.3).

About three-quarters of the single fathers were divorced. Separated fathers made up 14 percent of the sample. Small proportions of single fathers were never married (7 percent) and widowed (4 percent). Compared with single mothers, single fathers were more likely to be divorced, less likely to be never married, and as likely to be separated or widowed (see Table 7.3).

Help That Could Have Saved Marriage (Divorced Only)

Divorced single parents were asked, "Looking back to your marriage, do you feel that it had a chance of being saved?" Forty-two percent of the divorced

¹ Significance test for age became a single parent (mean for fathers = 34.5, S.D. = 6.7 vs. mean for mothers = 29.7, S.D. = 6.7): $F = 23.99$; $df = 1, 222$; $p < .0001$.

Table 7.3. DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS BY SEX OF PARENT

	Single Fathers (N=97) Percent	Single Mothers (N=387) Percent
<u>AGE</u>		
16-17	0.0	0.5
18-24	2.1	17.1
25-34	27.8	38.2
35-44	46.4	31.0
45+	23.7	13.2
Total	100.0	100.0
<u>RACE</u>		
White	90.7	72.9
Black	4.1	15.2
Hispanic	4.1	4.7
Other racial groups	1.0	7.2
Total	100.0	100.0
<u>MARITAL STATUS</u>		
Divorced	74.2	46.3
Separated	14.4	14.2
Widowed	7.2	8.8
Never married	4.1	30.7
Total	100.0	100.0

Note: Significance test for age (16-24, 25-34, 35+): chi square = 25.77; df = 2; $p < .0001$

Significance test for race (White vs. other): corrected chi square = 12.76; df = 1, $p < .001$

Significance test for marital status: chi square = 30.35; df = 3; $p < .0001$

single fathers felt that their marriages could have been saved. Divorced single fathers appeared more likely than divorced single mothers to feel that their marriages could have been saved (42 percent vs. 27 percent).

Those feeling that their marriages could have been saved were asked what kind of help could have saved their marriages if it would have been available. The responses for fathers, grouped into several categories, most frequently fell into the category "some type of counseling." See **Table 7.4**.

LENGTH OF SINGLE PARENTHOOD

As part of the research design, every single parent respondent had to have been a single parent for at least 12 months. Male respondents had been single parents (the most recent time) for a mean of 4.2 years, ranging from one year to 16 years. Female respondents tended to have been single parents (the most recent time) longer -- a mean of 6.2 years, ranging from one year to 23 years.²

LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

Seventy-eight percent of the single fathers lived on their own with their minor children. Twelve percent of the single fathers had at least one older child (age 18 or older) at home, and 6 percent lived with their parents or other relatives. Four percent shared housing with friends or roommates. Single fathers appeared less likely than single mothers to live with their parents or other relatives (6 percent vs. 17 percent). See **Appendix Table F-1**.

CURRENT EDUCATIONAL AND ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

Table 7.5 compares various educational and economic characteristics of single fathers and single mothers. Ninety-four percent of the single fathers were high school graduates, including 31 percent who were college graduates. In contrast, 80 percent of the single mothers were high school graduates, including only 9 percent who were college graduates.

Forty-one percent of the single fathers (age 25 or older) completed job training or received a vocational/technical certificate or diploma from a technical institute, trade or business school, hospital, or community college.

² Significance test for length of status: (mean = 4.2; S.D. = 2.9 vs. mean = 6.2, S.D. = 4.5): $F = 17.85$; $df = 1, 482$; $p < .0001$.

Table 7.4. HELP THAT COULD HAVE SAVED MARRIAGE IF AVAILABLE*

	Fathers		Mothers	
	Percent	Number	Percent	Number
Counseling	36.7	11	29.2	19
Change in counseling	20.0	6	10.8	7
Better communication	10.0	3	6.2	4
Help with alcohol/drugs	6.7	2	15.4	10
Change in spouse	6.7	2	9.2	6
Counseling and better communication	0.0	0	4.6	3
Help with alcohol and counseling	0.0	0	1.5	1
Other	20.0	6	20.0	13
Do not know	0.0	0	3.0	2
Total	100.0	30	100.0	65

* Responses from divorced respondents who felt that their last marriage had a chance of being saved

Table 7.5. BY SEX OF PARENT
CURRENT EDUCATIONAL AND ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

	Single Fathers (N=95) Percent	Single Mothers (N=319) Percent
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT (AGES 25+ ONLY)		
Less than high school	6.3	20.1
High school graduate	32.6	50.2
Some college	30.5	20.4
College graduate	30.5	9.4
Total	100.0	100.0
COMPLETED VOCATIONAL TRAINING	(N=95) Percent	(N=319) Percent
Yes	41.1	27.3
No	58.9	72.7
Total	100.0	100.0
EMPLOYMENT STATUS	(N=97) Percent	(N=384) Percent
Full-time	81.4	40.6
Part-time	7.2	12.5
Unemployed	6.2	8.9
Out of labor force	5.2	38.0
Total	100.0	100.0
AFDC STATUS	(N=97) Percent	(N=384) Percent
Yes	4.1	52.5
No	95.9	47.5
Total	100.0	100.0
ANNUAL FAMILY INCOME (1983)	(N=97) Percent	(N=384) Percent
< \$8,000	8.3	49.6
\$8,000-\$14,000	11.5	21.7
\$14,000-\$20,000	17.7	15.5
\$20,000-\$24,000	11.5	5.5
\$24,000-\$30,000	19.8	4.6
\$30,000+	31.3	3.1
Total	100.0	100.0
CURRENT HOUSING TENURE	(N=97) Percent	(N=384) Percent
Own	60.8	28.4
Rent	37.1	69.5
Rent-free	2.1	2.1
Total	100.0	100.0

Note: Significance test for education: chi square = 39.29; df = 3; p < .0001

Significance test for Votch: corrected chi square = 5.93; df = 1; NS

Significance test for employment status: chi square = 55.61; df = 2; p < .0001

Significance test for AFDC status: corrected chi square = 72.06; df = 1; p < .0001

Significance test for income (< \$20,000 vs. \$20,000+): corrected chi square = 101.56; df = 1; p < .0001

Significance test for current housing tenure (rent vs. own): corrected chi square = 34.81; df = 1; p < .0001

Single fathers most often received training in the crafts (36 percent) or for professional/technical positions (23 percent). Single mothers appeared less likely than single fathers to have completed job training (27 percent vs. 41 percent) and, in contrast, most often received training for clerical positions (47 percent) or service positions (28 percent).

Eighty-one percent of the single fathers were employed full-time, 7 percent worked part-time, and 6 percent were unemployed. Five percent of the single fathers were out of the labor force. Compared with single mothers, single fathers were more likely to be employed full-time and less likely to be out of the labor force (see **Table 7.5**). **Table 7.6** shows that single fathers most frequently held professional/technical, crafts, or operative positions; while single mothers most frequently held clerical, service, or professional/technical positions. In general, the occupational status rankings of the jobs held by single fathers were higher than those held by single mothers.³

Only four percent of the single fathers were receiving AFDC when surveyed, compared with 53 percent of the single mothers. Fifty-one percent of the single fathers had annual incomes of \$24,000 or more in 1983. Twenty percent of the fathers had annual incomes of less than \$14,000, including 8 percent who had incomes of less than \$8,000. Single fathers tended to have considerably higher incomes than single mothers (see **Table 7.5**).

Finally, sixty-one percent of single fathers were home owners; 37 percent were renters, and 2 percent lived rent-free. Single fathers were more likely than single mothers to be home owners (see **Table 7.5**).

THE CHILDREN OF SINGLE FATHERS

NUMBER AND AGES OF CHILDREN

Among single fathers, the number of children per family ranged from one to five. Fifty-four percent had one child; 36 percent had two children, and 10 percent had three or more children. Single fathers appeared to have fewer children than did single mothers (see **Table 7.7**).

³ Significance test for difference between means (fathers: mean = 42.2, S.D. = 13.9 vs. mothers: mean = 37.6, S.D. = 10.6): $F = 9.18$; $df = 1, 288$; $p < .01$.

EMPLOYED SINGLE PARENTS:
Table 7.6. TYPES OF OCCUPATIONS^a BY SEX OF PARENT

	Fathers	Mothers
	(N=86)	(N=205)
	Percent	Percent
Professional/Technical	39.5	15.1
Crafts	17.4	3.4
Operatives	16.3	9.3
Sales	10.5	6.3
Clerical	5.8	42.0
Service	5.8	21.0
Laborer	4.7	2.9
Total	100.0	100.0

^a Refers to occupation at time of survey

Table 7.7 CHARACTERISTICS OF CHILDREN BY SEX OF PARENT

	Single Fathers	Single Mothers
	(N=97)	(N=387)
NUMBER OF CHILDREN	Percent	Percent
1 child	53.6	46.0
2 children	36.1	33.9
3+ children	10.3	20.2
Total	100.0	100.0

	(N=97)	(N=387)
AGE OF YOUNGEST CHILD	Percent	Percent
0-2	3.1	18.9
3-5	20.6	23.0
6-9	20.6	23.0
10-14	36.1	25.1
15-17	19.5	10.1
Total	100.0	100.0

AGE OF YOUNGEST CHILD WHEN MOTHER OR FATHER BECAME SINGLE PARENT ^a (Divorced and Separated Only)	(N=86)	(N=229)
	Percent	Percent
0-2	33.8	52.0
3-5	20.9	23.6
6-9	20.9	15.3
10-14	23.2	8.7
15-17	1.2	0.4
Total	100.0	100.0

^a Refers to the most recent item for those who have been single parents more than once.

Note: Significance test for number of children: chi square = 5.19; df = 2; NS

Significance test for age of youngest child (0-5 vs. 6+): corrected chi square = 10.06; df = 1; p < .01

Significance test for age of youngest child when mother or father became single parent (mean = 5.9; S.D. = 4.3 vs. mean = 3.5; S.D. = 3.7): F = 23.97; df = 1, 313; p < .0001

The children of single fathers ranged in age from less than a year old to age 17. **Appendix Table F-2** shows that, of the total of 155 children living with single fathers, 2 percent were age 2 or younger; 16 percent were ages 3 to 5; 23 percent were ages 6 to 9; 36 percent were ages 10 to 14; and 23 percent were ages 15 to 17.

The children of single fathers tended to be older than those living with single mothers. The average age of children living with their fathers was 10.5, compared with 9.0 for those living with their mothers.⁴ Twenty-four percent of single fathers had a preschooler (age 5 or younger) living with them compared with 42 percent of single mothers (see **Table 7.7**).

AGE OF YOUNGEST CHILD WHEN MOTHER OR FATHER BECAME SINGLE PARENT (Divorced and Separated Only)

When divorced and separated single fathers became single parents (the most recent time), the mean age of their youngest child at the time was 5.9 years, significantly older than the mean age of 3.5 years for the youngest child of their female counterparts. **Table 7.7** shows that about a third of the divorced and separated single fathers and about half of the divorced and separated single mothers had at least one child age 2 or younger at home when they became single parents.

CUSTODY

Sixty-five percent of the single fathers had sole physical custody of all their children.⁵ About a quarter (27 percent) had joint custody arrangements; 5 percent had split custody, and 3 percent had other arrangements.⁶

Among single fathers, custody arrangements were not related to age or income. Fathers with less than a college education appeared more likely than other fathers to have sole physical custody (78 percent vs. 55 percent).

⁴ Significance test for ages of children, difference between means (10.5, S.D. = 4.4 vs 9.0, S.D. = 4.9): $F = 11.06$; $df = 1, 876$; $p < .001$.

⁵ Sole physical custody of all children includes court-ordered physical custody as well as cases in which custody was not addressed (e.g., a widowed or never married parent).

⁶ "Other arrangements" do not have official, legal status.

Single fathers were less likely than single mothers to have sole physical custody of all their children (65 percent compared with 95 percent).⁷

CHILD-REARING

The following examination of parent-child relationships among single fathers and the absent mothers' relationships with their children is based on items, categories, and a parenting role scale defined and developed in Chapter 4.

PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP

Table 7.8 shows how much trouble parents with children ages 5 to 17 were having in a variety of areas of child-rearing or parent-child relationships. The "ability to delegate household chores to their children" (21 percent), the "ability to deal with the problems of raising children" (19 percent), and the "ability to handle discipline and punishment" (18 percent) were the items cited most often as causing fathers at least a moderate amount of trouble. Single fathers appeared to be having less trouble than single mothers with the "ability to provide their children with appropriate recreational and play activities" (10 percent compared with 20 percent). No significant differences between single fathers and single mothers were found, however, consistent with findings reported in Chapter 4 (see **Table 4.22**).

Having parent-child relationship problems was related to having children with school, behavioral, and physical health problems among single fathers. These same relationships were found for single mothers in Chapter 4 (see **Appendix Tables D-11 and D-12** in Chapter 4).

ABSENT MOTHER'S RELATIONSHIP WITH HER CHILDREN

In 93 of the 97 single father families, one or more absent parents were still alive. In 88 percent of those families, single fathers reported that their children spent time with an absent parent. Single fathers were more likely than single mothers to say their children spent time with an absent

⁷ Significance test (sole physical custody for all children vs. other custody arrangements): corrected chi square = 66.89; df = 1; p < .0001.

Table 7.8. THE AMOUNT OF TROUBLE FATHERS AND MOTHERS WITH CHILDREN AGES 5 TO 17 ARE HAVING WITH THE PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP

ITEM	FATHERS			MOTHERS		
	Amount of Trouble			Amount of Trouble		
	Number	None/Minor	Moderate+ ^a	Number	None/Minor	Moderate+ ^a
		Percent	Percent		Percent	Percent
1. Your ability to delegate household chores to your children	88	79.5	20.5	303	82.5	17.5
2. Your ability to deal with problems of raising children	88	80.7	19.3	303	76.2	23.8
3. Your ability to handle discipline and punishment	88	81.8	18.2	303	78.2	21.8
4. The way your children are turning out	88	84.1	15.9	303	84.5	15.5
5. Communication between children and you	88	84.1	15.9	303	85.8	14.2
6. Your ability to provide your children with religious or spiritual experiences	88	85.2	14.8	303	88.8	11.2
7. Your ability to handle concerns about family loss (death, divorce, separation)	88	89.8	10.2	302	84.8	15.2
8. The respect your children show you	88	89.8	10.2	303	82.5	17.5
9. Your ability to provide your children with appropriate recreational and play activities	88	90.9	9.1	303	80.5	19.5
10. Your ability to help your children with their schoolwork	88	90.9	9.1	303	83.8	16.2
11. Your ability to advise your children about education or career plans	80	91.2	8.8	275	87.6	12.4
12. Your ability to teach your children about sex	87	92.0	8.0	303	91.1	8.9
13. Your ability to protect your children from physical and/or sexual abuse and/or exploitation	88	94.3	5.7	301	91.4	8.6
14. Your ability to provide your children with love and affection	88	94.3	5.7	302	95.0	5.0

^a Includes Moderate or Serious/Severe

parent (88 percent compared with 58 percent).⁸ Among the fathers whose children did not spend any time with their absent mothers (N=11), 6 were satisfied with that arrangement; 4 were dissatisfied, and 1 was neutral.

In the 82 families in which absent mothers spent time with the children, 53 percent of the fathers were satisfied with the way the children were getting along with their absent mother; 16 percent were neutral; and 31 percent of the fathers were dissatisfied. The reasons for being dissatisfied included: the absent mother's not spending enough time with the child (N=6); the child's time spent with the mother being filled with conflict (N=5); and the absent mother's "bad influence" on the child due to alcohol or drug use (N=3).

Forty percent of the single fathers were having a moderate or serious/severe amount of trouble with the help they were getting from the absent parent in raising the children. Twenty-four percent of the fathers had at least a moderate amount of trouble handling the relationship between the child and the absent parent. Fathers and mothers did not significantly differ on either of these items. (These findings are consistent with those reported in Table 4.27).

Among single fathers, those younger than age 35 appeared more likely than older single fathers to be having at least a moderate amount of trouble with the help they get from the absent mother in raising the children (62 percent vs. 30 percent). In addition, those with sole custody of all their children appeared more likely than fathers with other forms of custody to have at least a moderate amount of trouble handling the relationship between the child and his or her mother (29 percent vs. 15 percent). Neither item was related to the education or income of single fathers.

Note that henceforth only the age, educational, income, and custody type differences among single fathers will be reported.

HOW FATHERS VIEW SINGLE PARENT FAMILIES

Respondents were asked if they felt single parent families were "just as normal and healthy as two parent families" or "not as normal and healthy as two parent families." Fifty-five percent of the single fathers described single parent families to be "not as normal and healthy as two parent families."

⁸ Significance test for spend time with absent parent (fathers vs. mothers): corrected chi square = 28.79; df = 1; p < .0001.

Single fathers were more likely than single mothers to describe single parent families in that way (55 percent vs. 32 percent).⁹

MANAGING AS A SINGLE HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD

WORK AND FAMILY LIFE

Employed single fathers were asked if they had made any decisions in the following areas in the past year because of family responsibilities: the number of hours to work, the time of day to work, the distance to commute, and whether to change work responsibilities (see Table 7.9). This section describes these work decisions related to family life among employed single fathers as well as describing their work schedule satisfaction and their satisfaction with the number of hours they work.

About half of the employed single fathers made decisions about the number of hours to work because of family needs. Nineteen percent decided to work more hours. Twenty-one percent decided to work fewer hours, including 7 percent who decided to no longer work overtime. Overall, 69 percent of the employed single fathers were satisfied with the number of hours they worked; 19 percent wanted to work fewer hours, and 13 percent wanted to work more hours. Forty-five percent agreed or strongly agreed that they were not able to spend enough time with their children because of work.¹⁰ Similarly, 49 percent of employed single mothers felt that way about work.

All respondents were also asked: "Do you spend time working for pay more or less often since becoming a single parent?" Fifty-six percent of the fathers reported "no change" in the amount of time they spent working since becoming a single parent; 28 percent reported spending more time, and 17 percent reported spending less time. In contrast, 27 percent of the mothers reported "no change" in the amount of time they spent working; 42 percent reported spending more time, and 31 percent reported spending less time working.¹¹

⁹ Significance test: corrected chi square = 16.23; df = 1; $p < .0001$.

¹⁰ Respondents were asked: "How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about how your work might affect your family and personal life. Because of work, you are not able to spend enough time with your children." Respondents could answer strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree.

¹¹ Significance test for time spent working (fathers vs. mothers): 28.71; df = 2; $p < .0001$.

Table 7.9. WORK DECISIONS MADE IN PAST YEAR BECAUSE OF
FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES BY SEX OF PARENT

TYPE OF DECISIONS	Fathers		Mothers	
	Percent	Number	Percent	Number
<u>NUMBER OF HOURS TO WORK</u>				
No decision	51.2	44	59.8	122
Work more hours	18.6	16	22.5	46
Work fewer hours	14.0	12	14.2	29
Refuse overtime	7.0	6	2.5	5
Other	9.3	8	1.0	2
Total	100.0	86	100.0	204
<u>TIME OF DAY TO WORK</u>				
No decision	58.1	50	66.2	135
Work days only	9.3	8	11.3	23
Work around child's schedule	26.7	23	12.3	25
Work night only	1.2	1	5.9	12
Other	4.7	4	3.9	8
Total	100.0	86	100.0	204
<u>CHANGING WORK RESPONSIBILITIES</u>				
No decision	76.7	66	76.0	155
Increase responsibility	8.1	7	12.7	26
Reduce responsibility	15.1	13	11.3	23
Total	100.0	86	100.0	204
<u>COMMUTING</u>				
No decision	93.0	80	75.0	153
Work close to home	1.2	1	11.3	23
Move close to work	1.2	1	3.4	7
Work further away	1.2	1	2.9	6
Work at home	2.3	2	2.5	5
Stay in metro area	1.2	1	2.5	5
Other	0.0	0	2.5	5
Total	100.0	86	100.0	204

Note: Significance test for decisions (yes vs. no) by sex:

Number of hours to work: corrected chi square = 1.35; df = 1; NS

Time of day to work: corrected chi square = 1.36; df = 1; NS

Changing work responsibilities: corrected chi square = 0; df = 1; NS

Commuting: corrected chi square = 11.33; df = 1; p < .001

Forty-two percent of the employed single fathers made decisions about the time of day to work because of family needs. Twenty-seven percent decided to arrange their work schedule around their child's schedule, for example, to be home when their children got home from school or to be home to see their children off to school in the morning. Nine percent decided to work days only. Altogether, 82 percent worked during the day; 37 percent of the employed single fathers had flexible work schedules, and 80 percent were satisfied with their work schedules.

About a quarter (23 percent) of the employed single fathers decided to change responsibilities at work because of responsibilities at home. Fifteen percent decided to reduce responsibilities at work in order to be home with their children more often. Eight percent decided to take on more responsibilities at work in order to earn more money.

Seven percent of the employed single fathers made decisions about commuting, including two percent who decided to work at home based on considerations about commuting. At the time of the survey, 11 percent of the employed single fathers worked at home.

Employed single fathers were as likely as employed single mothers to make decisions about the number of hours to work, the time of day to work, and whether to change work responsibilities because of family needs. Single fathers were less likely than single mothers, however, to make decisions about commuting because of family needs, probably reflecting the lesser likelihood of transportation problems among single fathers (see **Table 7.9**).

CHILD CARE

Among the 64 single fathers who had at least one child age 12 or younger, 40 (63 percent) used child care on a regular basis. These fathers arranged care for 74 children. The primary types of child care arranged by single fathers, juxtaposed with those arranged by single mothers, are shown in **Table 7.10**. For fathers, the most frequently used arrangement was care in a licensed family home (20 percent). For mothers, in contrast, care in the child's home with a relative was the most frequently used arrangement (29 percent). Being cared for at the child's own home by an unrelated individual (18 percent) and going to a relative's home (16 percent) were the next most frequently used types of child care for single fathers. The relatives providing the care at their homes were either the child's aunts, uncles, or cousins. Care in a non-relative's home was arranged for 14 percent of the fathers' children. Care in

Table 7.10. PRIMARY CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS FOR CHILDREN AGES 12 OR YOUNGER BY SEX OF PARENT

	Fathers		Mothers	
	Percent of Children	Number	Percent of Children	Number
Licensed family home	20.3	15	11.1	21
Care in child's home with non-relative	17.6	13	11.6	22
Care in relative's home	16.2	12	11.1	21
Care in non-relative's home	13.5	10	15.9	30
Care in child's home with relative	10.8	8	28.6	54
Preschool	8.1	6	10.1	19
Group care center	8.1	6	9.5	18
Other arrangements	5.5	4	2.1	4
Total	100.0	74	100.0	189

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the child's home with a relative was arranged for 11 percent of the children. Preschool and group care centers were each used on a regular basis by 8 percent of the 74 children.

Single fathers appeared more likely than single mothers to use child care away from their own homes (84 percent compared with 60 percent). Use of relatives or unrelated individuals and use of regulated or unregulated care was no different for single fathers and single mothers.

Reasons For Not Using Child Care

The 24 fathers (37 percent) who did not use child care for their children ages 12 or younger cited two main reasons for not using child care on a regular basis. (Their multiple responses were grouped into several categories.) Nine fathers believed that their "children were old enough to care for themselves." Of the 26 children viewed as "old enough to care for themselves," one was age 6 (at home with a 10 and an 11 year old); three were age 8; one was 9; four were 10; nine were 11; and eight were 12. Eight fathers reported that they "were home when their children were home." The other seven fathers reported various other reasons for not using child care on a regular basis.

Payment For Child Care

Eighty-two percent of the children of single fathers were in child care paid for by their fathers. In-home care with a relative (57 percent without charge), care in relative's home (33 percent without charge), and in-home care with a non-relative (29 percent without charge) were the types of child care used most frequently without charge to the fathers. Overall, single fathers appeared more likely than single mothers to pay for child care (82 percent vs. 54 percent). See Table 7.11.

Supplemental Child Care

Parents who used day care or a sitter on a regular basis were asked: "What type of supplemental day care, if any, do you use?" Fifty-five percent of the single fathers who had regular child care arrangements for their children also had other supplemental child care that they could use whenever necessary. The most frequently used supplemental types of child care by single fathers, similar to those used by single mothers, were care in a relative's home (19 percent), care in the child's home with a non-relative (14 percent) and care in the child's home with a relative (12 percent). See Appendix Table F-3. As

Table 7.11. PRIMARY CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS FOR CHILDREN AGES 12 OR YOUNGER
BY WHETHER PARENT PAYS FOR CHILD CARE

	<u>Proportion Paying for Child Care</u>	
	<u>Fathers</u>	<u>Mothers</u>
Licensed family home	100.0	72.2
Care in child's home with non-relative	71.4	75.0
Care in relative's home	66.7	50.0
Care in non-relative's home	90.0	93.3
Care in child's home with relative	42.9	23.5
Preschool	100.0	20.0
Group care center	83.3	62.5
Other arrangements	75.0	0.0

Note: 21 cases missing for mothers and 13 cases missing for fathers

with single mothers, grandparents were the chief supplemental care providers for the children of single fathers.

Adequacy of Child Care Arrangements

Sixty-nine percent of single fathers expressed satisfaction with their child care arrangements, compared with 84 percent of single mothers.¹² Among the 12 single fathers with child care problems, 7 described the problems as "big," and 5 described them as "small." The problems single fathers were having with their child care were grouped into the following categories: 5 "wanted better care", 3 "wanted more reliable care", 2 "wanted extended hours", 1 "wanted cheaper care", and 1 "wanted better located care". Those with children in preschools (75 percent) were the most likely to report having problems, while those whose children went to the home of a non-relative were the least likely to report having problems (14 percent). The numbers using each arrangement are small, however, and the responses should be viewed with caution. **Table 7.12** compares the proportions of fathers and mothers expressing problems with the various child care arrangements.

HOMEMAKING

Respondents were asked if they had had any trouble completing daily tasks such as cooking, cleaning, or shopping in the past twelve months. Forty-three percent of the single fathers (N=39) reported having problems completing daily homemaking tasks. This proportion was similar to that found for single mothers (40 percent).

Those having trouble were asked to describe the problem. Their responses, grouped into several categories, are listed in **Table 7.13**. Single fathers and single mothers most often cited "the lack of time" as a problem. Two-thirds of single fathers and one-third of single mothers cited that as a problem.

Respondents were also asked if anyone helped them with their daily homemaking tasks. Fifty-two percent of the fathers (N=50) reported getting help with their homemaking tasks. Children were the most frequent helpers (76 percent), followed by mothers (16 percent), friends (10 percent), and other relatives (6 percent). For single mothers, likewise, 53 percent reported

¹² Significance test for problems with child care (fathers vs. mothers): corrected chi square = 3.12; df = 1; NS.

Table 7.12. PERCENT REPORTING PROBLEMS WITH VARIOUS CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS BY SEX OF PARENT

	Number of Fathers Using Arrangement	Percent of Fathers Expressing Problem With Arrangement	Number of Mothers Using Arrangement	Percent of Mothers Expressing Problem With Arrangement
Preschool	4	75.0	12	33.3
Licensed family home	8	37.5	18	16.7
Care in relative's home	6	33.3	20	15.0
Care in child's home with relative	3	33.3	48	4.2
Care in child's home with non-relative	4	25.0	22	13.6
Group care center	5	20.0	18	22.2
Care in non-relative's home	7	14.3	30	23.3
Other arrangements	2	0.0	4	50.0
Total of all arrangements	39	30.8	127	15.7

Table 7.13. PROBLEMS THAT MADE COMPLETION OF HOME MAKING TASKS
DIFFICULT BY SEX (MULTIPLE RESPONSES INCLUDED)^a

	Fathers (N=39) Percent	Mothers (N=152) Percent
Lack of time	66.7	34.2
No motivation/boredom	15.4	9.2
Poor physical health/injury	12.8	21.7
Burned out/depressed	10.3	7.9
Transportation problems	2.6	15.1
Lack money	0.0	5.9
Lack skill/need help	0.0	2.0
Other	0.0	4.6

^a Includes only those who had trouble completing daily home-making tasks

getting help with their homemaking tasks, and children were also the most frequent helpers (65 percent).

Finally, respondents were asked: "Do you spend time on household work (cooking, cleaning, laundry, shopping, errands) more or less often since becoming a single parent?" Seventeen percent of the fathers reported "no change" in the amount of time they spent on household work since becoming a single parent; 78 percent reported spending more time, and 5 percent reported spending less time. In contrast, 31 percent of the mothers reported "no change" in the amount of time spent on household work since becoming a single parent; 50 percent reported spending more time, and 19 percent reported spending less time on household work.¹³

LEGAL PROBLEMS

A third of the single fathers (N=32) reported having current legal problems. The problems they cited most frequently concerned "divorce/property settlement" and "custody/visitation" (see Table 7.14). Single fathers were more likely than single mothers to report having legal problems (33 percent vs. 20 percent).¹⁴

PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH OF SINGLE FATHERS

PHYSICAL HEALTH

Eighty-eight percent of the single fathers rated their overall health as either "good" or "excellent." However, 19 percent of the fathers (N=18) reported having a physical health problem or physical handicap that interfered with their daily activities in the past year. Those problems or handicaps included back problems, leg and foot problems, intestinal infections, and heart trouble. Eight of the fathers with a physical health problem or handicap said that their activities were limited everyday; 3 reported that their activities were limited at least once a week; 1 reported once a month, and 5 reported being limited by health problems only several times a year. (Additional

¹³ Significance test for time spent on household work (fathers vs. mothers): chi square = 25.81; df = 2; $p < .0001$.

¹⁴ Significance test for legal problems (female vs. male): corrected chi square = 7.15; df = 1; $p < .01$.

Table 7.14. TYPES OF LEGAL PROBLEMS BY SEX OF PARENT^a
(MULTIPLE RESPONSES INCLUDED)

	Fathers (N=32) Percent	Mothers (N=76) Percent
Divorce/Property settlement	37.5	31.6
Custody/Visitation	34.4	7.9
Finances/Debts	18.8	13.2
Criminal	12.5	3.9
Child support	6.3	19.7
Job-related	6.3	1.3
Welfare fraud	0.0	6.6
Personal injury	0.0	6.6
Child-related (truancy, delinquency)	0.0	5.3
Probate	0.0	2.6
Paternity	0.0	2.6
Other	6.3	9.2

^a Includes only those who reported having a legal problem

information was missing for one father.) Nearly all (16 out of 17) of those who reported a health problem had felt the need for professional help in dealing with it during the past year and had tried to do something about the problem, most often consulting with a physician or other medical professional.

Having a physical health problem or handicap that interfered with daily activities appeared more likely among older single fathers (age 35 and older). The physical health of single fathers did not differ significantly from that of single mothers on these measures.

MENTAL HEALTH

Eighteen percent of the single fathers (N=17) said that mental health or emotional problems had interfered with their daily activities in the past year. Depression (N=10) was the most frequently mentioned type of emotional problem. Five of the fathers said that their activities were limited everyday; 5 reported being limited by mental health problems at least once a week; 2 reported being limited once a month, and 4 reported that mental health problems interfered with their daily activities several times a year. (Additional information was missing for one father.) Most (14 out of 16) of those who reported a mental health problem had felt the need for professional help with it during the past year. A slightly smaller proportion (13 out of 16) said that they tried to do something about the problem, usually seeking professional help from a counselor, psychiatrist, or psychologist.

Other measures of emotional well-being contained in this section, a self-esteem scale and a mastery scale, were fully described in Chapter 5. Briefly, scores on the self-esteem scale can range from zero (high self-esteem) to six (very low self-esteem). Scores on the mastery scale can range from zero (low feelings of control) to twenty-one (high feelings of control). Single fathers' self-esteem scores tended toward the high end of the self-esteem scale. The average score was 1.3 (with a standard deviation of 1.4). Single fathers' mastery scores tended toward the high end of the mastery scale. The average score was 14.1 (with a standard deviation of 2.8).

Single fathers age 34 and younger (28 percent) and those whose annual incomes were less than \$14,000 (32 percent) appeared more likely than those age 35 and older (13 percent) and those whose annual incomes were \$14,000 or higher (14 percent) to report having a mental health problem. Fathers (with at least one child age 5 to 17) who had serious concerns about the learning, emotional/behavioral, or physical health problems of one or more children

appeared more likely than other fathers to have a mental health problem (24 percent compared with 8 percent).

Fathers who rated their overall health as "fair" or "poor" had lower self-esteem and a lesser sense of control over their own lives than those who rated their overall health as "good" or "excellent."¹⁵ Fathers with mental health problems also tended to have lower levels of self-esteem.¹⁶ Physical health problems and mental health problems were not found to be significantly related, however. Overall, 31 percent of the fathers reported having a physical health problem or a mental health problem that interfered with their daily activities.

The mental health of single fathers did not differ significantly from that of single mothers on the measure that involved interference with daily activities. On the scale measuring self-esteem, there was also no significant difference between the average scores of single fathers and single mothers.¹⁷ Single fathers, however, were found to have significantly higher feelings of mastery than single mothers.¹⁸

INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

SATISFACTION WITH LIFE AS A SINGLE PERSON

Overall, 67 percent (N=65) of the 97 single fathers responded "yes" to the question: "Are you satisfied with your life as a single person?" Moreover, 57 percent of the single fathers agreed or strongly agreed with the statement:

¹⁵ Significance test for self-esteem scale by health rating (poor, fair: mean = 2.33, S.D. = 1.37 vs. good, excellent: mean = 1.12, S.D. = 1.32): $F = 8.79$; $df = 1, 94$; $p < .01$. Significance test for mastery scale by health rating (poor, fair: mean = 11.66, S.D. = 2.31 vs. good, excellent: mean = 14.42, S.D. = 2.66): $F = 11.58$; $df = 1, 93$; $p < .001$.

¹⁶ Significance test for self-esteem (has a mental health problem: mean = 2.18, S.D. = 1.63 vs. does not have a mental health problem: mean = 1.08; S.D. = 1.25): $F = 9.71$; $df = 1, 94$; $p < .01$.

¹⁷ Significance test for self-esteem: (mean = 1.27; S.D. = 1.38 vs. mean = 1.55; S.D. = 1.56): $F = 2.58$; $df = 1, 477$; NS.

¹⁸ Significance test for mastery: (fathers' mean = 14.07; S.D. = 2.76 vs. mothers' mean = 13.11; S.D. = 3.02): $F = 8.02$; $df = 1, 477$; $p < .01$.

"Single parenthood is the best option for me."¹⁹ Single fathers and single mothers did not significantly differ on either item.

Romantic Involvement

Thirty-five percent of the 97 single fathers were "romantically involved." Among those "romantically involved," 38 percent (N=13) reported having problems with their relationships. Four of the fathers with problems felt the need for professional help. Single fathers and single mothers did not significantly differ on any of these items.

Importance of Remarrying

Respondents were asked how important it was to find a partner or to remarry at present. Twenty percent of the single fathers reported it was very important; 35 percent reported it was somewhat important, and 45 percent reported that it was of little or no importance.

Single fathers and single mothers did not significantly differ on this item. For single mothers, 13 percent reported that finding a partner or remarrying was very important; 32 percent reported it was somewhat important, and 55 percent reported it was of little or no importance.

Companionship and Dating

Respondents were also asked if they had a problem with companionship or dating in the past year. Thirty-three percent of the fathers (N=32) reported having problems in the past year, including the lack of time to date, the lack of money, and problems with compatibility and rejection. Single fathers appeared more likely than single mothers to report having problems with companionship or dating (33 percent vs. 22 percent).

Advantages and Disadvantages of Being Single

"Freedom" or "the independence to make my own decisions and to do as I please" was the most frequent response among single fathers to the question: "What is the biggest advantage of being single in your experience as a single parent?" The responses, grouped into several categories are in Table 7.15. In

¹⁹ Respondents could strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with a variety of statements related to family life.

Table 7.15. BIGGEST ADVANTAGE^a OF BEING SINGLE FOR FATHERS AND MOTHERS

BIGGEST ADVANTAGE	Fathers	Mothers
	(N=95) Percent	(N=380) Percent
Freedom/Independence	45	55
Close relationship with children	15	9
No difficulties of adult relationship	15	14
No advantages to being single	14	10
Can raise children as see fit	5	5
Feel better about myself	4	4
Have more time to myself	2	2
Other	0	2
Total	100	100

^a Respondents were asked: "What is the biggest advantage of being single in your experience as a single parent?" Their responses were grouped into the categories found in this table.

contrast, "loneliness or lack of companionship" was the most frequently cited disadvantage of being single among single fathers (see **Table 7.16**).²⁰ For single mothers, likewise, "freedom" was the most frequently cited advantage of being single; and "loneliness" was one of the more frequently cited disadvantages, but mentioned less frequently than "the lack of income" and "the lack of relief from child-rearing responsibilities" (see **Tables 7.15** and **7.16**).

FRIENDSHIP

Table 7.17 describes the marital and parental characteristics of the friends of single fathers. Most of the friends of single fathers tended to be married with children and, to a lesser extent, single without children. Single fathers were more likely than single mothers to report that at least some of their friends were married with children (73 percent compared with 54 percent). The friends of single mothers tended to be more evenly distributed between married friends with children and single friends with children. Single mothers appeared more likely than single fathers to report that at least some of their friends were single with children (53 percent compared with 38 percent).

Respondents were also asked: "Do you spend time being with friends or recreating more or less often since becoming a single parent?" Eleven percent of the single fathers reported "no change" in the amount of time spent with friends since becoming a single parent; 27 percent reported spending more time, and 62 percent reported spending less time. Similarly, 21 percent of the single mothers reported "no change;" 29 percent reported spending more time, and 50 percent reported spending less time with friends since becoming a single parent.

SUPPORT GROUP INVOLVEMENT

Thirty-three percent of the single fathers (N=32) belonged to a support group for parents or single parents, either currently or in the past. Those with at least some college education appeared more likely than other fathers to have ever belonged to a parent's support group. Single fathers and single mothers did not significantly differ in their support group involvement.

²⁰ Respondents were asked the open-ended question: "What is the biggest disadvantage of being single in your experience as a single person?" Their responses, grouped into several categories, are listed in **Table 7.16**.

Table 7.16. BIGGEST DISADVANTAGE^a OF BEING SINGLE FOR FATHERS AND MOTHERS

	Fathers (N=97) Percent	Mothers (N=382) Percent
Loneliness/Lack of companionship	27	15
Having sole responsibility for everything	13	8
Lack of time for self	13	5
Lack of support for family decisions	10	11
Lack of relief from child-rearing	9	19
Lack of role model for children	6	7
Lack of money	5	27
Responsibilities of household maintenance	2	3
No disadvantages to being single	1	4
Other	12	3
Total	100	100

^a Respondents were asked: "What is the biggest disadvantage of being single in your experience as a single parent?" Their responses were grouped into the categories found in this table.

Table 7.17. THE MARITAL AND PARENTAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FRIENDS OF SINGLE FATHERS AND MOTHERS

FATHERS					
(N=97)					
HOW MANY OF THEIR FRIENDS HAVE VARIOUS CHARACTERISTICS?					
	None	Few	Some	Most	Some/Most
CHARACTERISTICS OF FRIENDS	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Married with children	4.1	22.7	46.4	26.8	73.2
Married without children	32.0	43.3	22.7	2.1	24.8
Single with children	23.7	38.1	28.9	9.3	38.2
Single without children	10.3	46.4	24.7	18.6	43.3

MOTHERS					
(N=387)					
HOW MANY OF THEIR FRIENDS HAVE VARIOUS CHARACTERISTICS?					
	None	Few	Some	Most	Some/Most
CHARACTERISTICS OF FRIENDS	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Married with children	14.5	31.3	26.4	27.9	54.3
Married without children	52.2	32.3	13.2	2.3	15.5
Single with children	15.8	31.0	28.2	25.1	53.3
Single without children	29.5	39.3	21.2	10.1	31.3

Note: Fathers vs. Mothers: Significance test for married with children (none/few vs. some/most): corrected chi square = 10.65; df = 1; $p < .01$
 Significance test for married without children (none/few vs. some/most): corrected chi square = 3.99; df = 1; NS
 Significance test for single with children (none/few vs. some/most): corrected chi square = 6.47; df = 1; NS
 Significance test for single without children (none/few vs. some/most): corrected chi square = 4.50; df = 1; NS

Fathers who have never belonged to a parents' support group were asked to explain why not. From a list of responses, fathers with no support group involvement most often cited that they were getting enough support from family or friends and "didn't feel the need to join" or that they lacked interest and had "never even considered joining" (see Table 7.18).

Single fathers differed from single mothers on only one of the reasons for not joining a support group. Fathers were more likely than mothers to cite "don't like hearing about other people's problems" as a reason (15 percent vs. 3 percent).²¹

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

CURRENT STATUS

Ninety-seven single custodial fathers from Ramsey County were surveyed. They ranged in age from 24 to 61, with a mean age of 38.7. Ninety-one percent were White. About three-quarters were divorced, and 14 percent were separated. They became single fathers at a mean age of 34.5.

Ninety-four percent were high school graduates, including 31 percent with some college education and 31 percent who were college graduates. Eighty-one percent were employed full-time. Half had annual incomes of \$24,000 or higher. Only 4 percent were receiving AFDC when surveyed. Sixty-one percent were home owners.

Most (90 percent) had one or two dependent children. The children ranged in age from less than a year old to 17 years old, with a mean age of 10.5. In three-quarters of the families, the youngest child was of school age. More than three-quarters of the fathers lived with their minor children only.

The current status of single father families is substantially different from the current status of single mother families. Compared with single mothers, single fathers tend to be older, more likely to be White and divorced and tend to become single parents at older ages. Single fathers are more likely to be high school and college graduates, to be employed full-time, to be home owners, and tend to have higher incomes than single mothers. Fathers, finally, appear to have fewer children, and their children tend to be older than the children of single mothers.

²¹ Significance test: corrected chi square = 13.11; df = 1; p < .001.

REASONS FATHERS AND MOTHERS HAVE NEVER JOINED A SUPPORT GROUP
 Table 7.18. FOR PARENTS OR SINGLE PARENTS (MULTIPLE RESPONSES INCLUDED)

	Fathers (N=62) Percent	Mothers (N=293) Percent
Don't feel the need to join	45.2	37.9
Never even considered joining/No interest	40.3	37.5
Do not have enough time	30.6	16.4
Don't like groups	21.0	14.7
Don't like hearing about other people's problems	14.5	2.7
Do not have enough information	11.3	12.3
Don't know what they are	11.3	10.2
Don't like talking about my problems	9.7	16.4
Too embarrassed to join	6.5	4.4
Inconvenient meeting time	4.8	5.1
Child care problems	4.8	7.5
Transportation problems	0.0	7.8
Inconvenient location	0.0	3.4

CHILD-REARING

About two-thirds of the single fathers had sole physical custody of all their children. Nearly all (96 percent) of the single father families had at least one living absent parent. In the vast majority of those families (88 percent), the children spent at least some time with an absent mother. Single fathers were more likely than single mothers to have some form of shared custody arrangements and were also more likely to report that their children spent some time with an absent parent. Nearly a third of the fathers were dissatisfied with the way their children were getting along with their absent mother, however.

Most fathers reported that they were having little or no trouble with child-rearing or with their relationships to their children. The help that they received from an absent mother in raising the children and the way that they handled the relationship between the children and their mother were the areas cited by the fathers most often as being troublesome.

About a fifth of the employed single fathers decided to work fewer hours because of family responsibilities, and nearly a fifth wanted to work fewer hours than they were currently working. Fifteen percent of the employed fathers decided to reduce responsibilities at work in order to be home with their children more often.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT

Most single fathers did not report physical or mental health problems. As a group, single fathers had relatively high self-esteem and mastery. However, 31 percent of single fathers reported either physical or mental health problems that interfered with their normal activities. Among those who reported mental health problems, depression was most often cited. Those age 34 or younger, those whose annual incomes were less than \$14,000 and those who had serious concerns about learning, emotional/behavioral, or physical health problems of one or more of their children (ages 5 to 17) appeared more likely than other single fathers to report having mental health problems.

Single fathers were also generally satisfied with their lives as single persons. Forty-five percent believed that remarrying or finding a partner was of little or no importance. About a third were currently romantically involved. However, a third did report having problems with dating in the past year; about a quarter believed that "loneliness or lack of companionship" was the biggest disadvantage of being single, and 62 percent reported spending less

time with their friends since becoming single fathers. More than half, finally, considered single parent families to be "not as normal or healthy as two parent families." Only about one-third of single mothers felt that way.

CONCLUSIONS

Although the number of single father families has grown since 1970, single father families make up only a small proportion of all families with children and of single parent families as well. Single custodial fathers, moreover, tend to be older and better-off economically than single mothers. The economic status of single fathers, therefore, should not be an issue of public concern. The findings do suggest, however, that some single fathers have decided to reduce responsibilities as well as time at work in order to carry out responsibilities at home. The growing number of fathers in the work force who are single fathers, therefore, may be of concern to employers as more fathers confront alone the responsibilities of work and family. It is of interest to note, in this context, that 45 percent of single fathers felt that they did not spend enough time with their children because of work responsibilities.

Earlier chapters have concluded that programming to deal with problems of single parents and their children should be directed toward the family, not just the child, and should be comprehensive in nature, taking into account that problems (e.g., child-rearing and mental health) are likely to be interrelated. The findings in this analysis lend more support to those conclusions. They also suggest that, for many single father families, programming directed toward the family should encompass the other parent as well. Absent mothers, more so than absent fathers, are likely to be part of the life of the single parent family. Moreover, their involvement, although generally beneficial, can also be a source of dissatisfaction and difficulty for many families.

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APPENDIX A
SINGLE PARENT FAMILY STUDY
SUMMARY REPORTS AVAILABLE

SINGLE PARENT FAMILY STUDY
SUMMARY REPORTS AVAILABLE

Report #1	Single Parent Families: Backgrounds and Current Status
Report #2	Single Mothers: Employment, AFDC, and Self-Support
Report #3	Single Parents and Their Children
Report #4	Single Parent Families: Financial and Household Circumstances
Report #5	Physical and Mental Health of Single Parents
Report #6	Single Fathers
Report #7	Key Findings and Implications

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APPENDIX B
SINGLE PARENT FAMILY STUDY
ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**SINGLE PARENT FAMILY STUDY
ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

David Allen	Resources for Child Caring
Margaret Bringewatt	The Saint Paul Foundation
Marie Burgeson	Community Care Unit, Wilder Foundation
Shirley DeVries	Roosevelt Homes
M. Geraldine Gage, Ph.D.	Department of Family Social Science, University of Minnesota
Judith Healy	Northwest Area Foundation
Nancy Latimer	McKnight Foundation
Marilynn Lee	Services to Children, Wilder Foundation
Sweetie Lewis	New Beginning Center
Terry Lindeke	Community Human Services Department, Ramsey County
Wanda Miller	Health Services, St. Paul Public Schools
Mary Morris	Center for Separated and Divorced, Catholic Charities
Lynn Powers	North Suburban Child Guidance Center, Wilder Foundation
Ron Smith	Coalition for the Homeless
Gail Stremel	Community Human Services Department, Ramsey County
Willie Mae Wilson	St. Paul Urban League
Kathy Young	Neighborhood House
David Ziegenhagen	The Saint Paul Foundation

APPENDIX C
SINGLE PARENT FAMILY STUDY
CONFERENCE PROGRAM

**SINGLE PARENT FAMILIES
A NEEDS ASSESSMENT CONFERENCE
JUNE 7, 1985
CONFERENCE AGENDA**

**8:00 - 8:30/
Commons**

REGISTRATION

Pick up conference materials and name tag
Coffee and rolls available

**8:30 - 8:45/
Commons**

INTRODUCTION

Leonard Wilkening, President, Wilder Foundation

Paul Mattessich, Ph.D., Director, Office of Research and
Statistics, Wilder Foundation

**8:45 - 9:45/
Commons**

OVERVIEW OF THE SINGLE PARENT FAMILY STUDY RESULTS

- Introduction to the study and its methods
- Backgrounds and current status of single parents
- Child rearing and health needs of single parent families
- Social trends and implications for future status of single parents

Richard Chase, Ph.D., Research Associate
Philip Cooper, Project Assistant
Dan Mueller, Ph.D., Director

Community Needs Assessment
Wilder Foundation

**9:45 - 10:00/
Commons**

BREAK

The Single Parent Family Study was conducted by the Wilder Foundation
with additional funds provided by The Saint Paul Foundation.

10:00 - 11:45/
Commons

PROSPECTS FOR SINGLE PARENT SELF-SUFFICIENCY

What are the labor force trends affecting single parents? What are the characteristics of short-term and long-term AFDC recipients? Which single parents and how many are able to achieve financial independence?

Presenters: **R. Thomas Gillaspy**
State Demographer
Minnesota State Planning Agency

Joel Kvamme
Director of Operations Analysis
Minnesota Department of Human Services

Respondents: **Arvonne Fraser**
Senior Fellow
Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs
University of Minnesota

Bruce Heinz
Employment Counseling Supervisor
Ramsey County Community Human Services

Jan Smaby, Director
Hennepin County Economic Assistance

Willie Mae Wilson
Executive Director
St. Paul Urban League

11:45 - 1:00/
Commons

LUNCH

Tours of the village grounds will be conducted

1:00 - 2:45/

SPECIAL INTEREST SESSIONS:

Sun Lodge
(lower level)

● CHILDREN IN SINGLE PARENT FAMILIES

Meeting House

● TEEN MOTHERS

Earth Lodge
(upper level)

● THE PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH OF SINGLE PARENTS

Clearing

● SINGLE FATHERS

1:00 - 2:45/

CHILDREN IN SINGLE PARENT FAMILIES

This session will focus on child care, child custody, child development, and the human service needs of children in single parent families. Are the characteristics and needs of children different in one parent and two parent families?

Presenters: Judy Rothenberg, Director
Northwest Branch Child Guidance Center
Wilder Foundation

Daniel Mueller, Ph.D.
Director, Community Needs Assessment
Wilder Foundation

Respondents: David Allen, Executive Director
Resources for Child Caring, Inc.

Richard Leonard, Referee
Ramsey County Family Court

Terry Lindeke, Planning Specialist
Children's Services
Ramsey County Community Human Services

Sheila Moriarty, Executive Director
Governor's Council on Families and Children

1:00 - 2:45/

TEEN MOTHERS

This session will review new information on the educational, employment, health, and social needs of teenage mothers. It will also discuss the social and economic consequences of teenage motherhood.

Presenter: Richard Chase, Ph.D.
Research Associate
Community Needs Assessment
Wilder Foundation

Respondents: Janet Fausch
Program Coordinator
Face to Face Health and Counseling Service

Geraldine Carter, Ph.D.
Executive Director
Survival Skills Institute

Wanda Miller
Supervisor, School Health Program
St. Paul Public Schools

Nancy Harold, M.S.W., A.C.S.W.
Clinical Social Worker Supervisor
St. Paul Maternal and Infant Care Project

1:00 - 2:45/

THE PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH OF SINGLE PARENTS

How many single parents have serious problems with their physical health, their emotional health, or with alcohol/drug use? Are low self-esteem and social isolation common problems among single parents?

Presenters: **Sherry Muret-Wagstaff**
Research Fellow, Institute of Child Development
University of Minnesota

Philip Cooper
Community Needs Assessment
Wilder Foundation

Respondents: **Lynn Powers, Ph.D.,** Director
North Suburban Branch Child Guidance Center
Wilder Foundation

Barbara Schommer
Public Health Nurse Clinician
Ramsey County Public Health Nursing Service

Seymour Gross, Ph.D.
Director
Pilot City Mental Health Center

1:00 - 2:45/

SINGLE FATHERS

What are the characteristics, living conditions, and needs of single fathers? How do families headed by single fathers compare with those headed by single mothers?

Presenter: **Paul Mattessich, Ph.D.**
Director, Office of Research and Statistics
Wilder Foundation

Respondents: **Gene Lyle**
Senior Program Evaluator
Office of Research and Evaluation
Ramsey County Community Human Services

Patrick M. Doyle, Ph.D.
Psychotherapist, Burnsville Counseling Clinic

Pi-Nian Chang, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Department of Pediatrics
University of Minnesota

Mary Morris, Director
Center for Separated and Divorced
Catholic Charities

3:00 - 4:00/
Commons

SUMMATION AND REFLECTION

Ted Bowman, Associate Director
Community Care Unit
Wilder Foundation

Margaret Bringewatt
Program Officer
The Saint Paul Foundation

Nancy Latimer
Senior Program Officer
McKnight Foundation

Marilynn Lee, Director
Division of Services to Children and Families
Wilder Foundation

The bus will depart for Wilder Center 15 minutes after the close of this final session.

APPENDIX D
SUPPLEMENTAL TABLES FOR CHAPTER FOUR

CHILDREN FOR WHOM PARENTS HAD A SERIOUS CONCERN OVER LEARNING PROBLEMS IN THE PAST
 Appendix Table D-1. YEAR BY PARENTS' RATINGS OF SCHOOL PERFORMANCE^a

SERIOUS CONCERN EXPRESSED	ALL		SCHOOL PERFORMANCE RATED BELOW AVERAGE	
	Number	Percent	YES	NO
			(N=106) Percent	(N=449) Percent
Yes	29	5.2	14.2	3.1
No	526	94.8	85.8	96.9
Total	555	100.0	100.0	100.0

^a Includes only children who are attending school

Note: Significance test for school performance: corrected chi square = 18.91; df = 1; p < .0001

CHILDREN FOR WHOM PARENTS HAD A SERIOUS CONCERN OVER LEARNING PROBLEMS IN THE
 Appendix Table D-2. PAST YEAR BY SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR LEARNING PROBLEMS^a

SERIOUS CONCERN EXPRESSED	ALL		IN SPECIAL EDUCATION FOR LEARNING PROBLEM	
	Number	Percent	YES	NO
			(N=78) Percent	(N=477) Percent
Yes	28	5.0	17.9	2.9
No	527	95.0	82.1	97.1
Total	555	100.0	100.0	100.0

^a Includes only children who are attending school

Note: Significance test for special education: corrected chi square = 28.49; df = 1; p < .0001

CHILDREN FOR WHOM PARENTS HAD EVER SOUGHT PROFESSIONAL HELP FOR A LEARNING
PROBLEM BY PARENTS' RATINGS OF SCHOOL PERFORMANCE AND SPECIAL EDUCATION

Appendix Table D-3. PROGRAM FOR LEARNING PROBLEMS

PROFESSIONAL HELP SOUGHT	ALL		SCHOOL PERFORMANCE RATED BELOW AVERAGE		IN SPECIAL EDUCATION FOR LEARNING PROBLEM	
	Number	Percent	YES	NO	YES	NO
			(N=106)	(N=449)	(N=78)	(N=477)
			Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Yes	41	7.4	15.1	5.6	33.3	3.1
No	514	92.6	84.9	94.4	66.7	96.9
Total	555	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

^a Includes only children who are attending school

Note: Significance test for school performance: corrected chi square = 10.03; df = 1; p < .01
Significance test for special education: corrected chi square = 84.94; df = 1; p < .0001

Appendix Table D-4. CHILDREN HAVING AT LEAST A MODERATE AMOUNT OF TROUBLE WITH SCHOOL BEHAVIOR BY SPECIAL EDUCATION, SCHOOL PERFORMANCE, PROFESSIONAL HELP FOR LEARNING PROBLEMS, AND CONCERN OVER LEARNING PROBLEMS IN THE PAST YEAR^a

TROUBLE WITH SCHOOL BEHAVIOR ^b	ALL		SCHOOL PERFORMANCE RATED BELOW AVERAGE		IN SPECIAL EDUCATION FOR LEARNING PROBLEM		PROFESSIONAL HELP EVER SOUGHT FOR LEARNING PROBLEM ^c		SERIOUS CONCERN ABOUT LEARNING PROBLEM ^d	
	Number	Percent	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
			(N=106) Percent	(N=446) Percent	(N=78) Percent	(N=474) Percent	(N=41) Percent	(N=514) Percent	(N=29) Percent	(N=526) Percent
Yes	128	23.1	61.3	13.7	35.9	21.1	34.1	22.2	44.8	21.9
No	427	76.9	38.7	86.3	64.1	78.9	65.9	77.8	55.2	78.1
Total	555	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

^a Includes only children who are attending school.

^b Is the child having at least a moderate amount of trouble attending school or doing school work as necessary?

^c Has the parent ever sought professional help for a learning problem of the child?

^d Did the parent have a serious concern during the past year about the child's learning problem?

Note: Significance test for school performance: corrected chi square = 107.67; df = 1; p < .0001
 Significance test for special education: corrected chi square = 7.43; df = 1; p < .01
 Significance test for professional help: corrected chi square = 2.43; df = 1; NS
 Significance test for serious concern: corrected chi square = 6.93; df = 1; p < .01

Appendix Table D-5. HAVING A CHILD IN A SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR LEARNING PROBLEMS BY EDUCATION AND BY ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS: SINGLE MOTHERS ONLY^a

	CHILD IN LEARNING PROGRAM	
	YES	NO
	(N=54)	(N=230)
	Percent	Percent
ALL	19.0	81.0
EDUCATION (AGES 25 AND OVER)	(N=52)	(N=223)
	Percent	Percent
Less than high school	33.3	66.7
High school graduate	16.1	83.9
College or more	13.6	86.4
CURRENTLY RECEIVES AFDC	(N=54)	(N=230)
	Percent	Percent
Yes	25.8	74.2
No	13.2	86.8
INCOME	(N=53)	(N=228)
	Percent	Percent
Less than \$8,000	24.8	75.2
\$8,000-\$13,999	22.1	77.9
\$14,000 or more	9.4	90.6
EMPLOYMENT STATUS	(N=53)	(N=228)
	Percent	Percent
Employed full-time	13.5	86.5
Employed part-time	12.1	87.9
Unemployed	22.2	77.8
Not in labor force	28.4	71.6

^a Includes only mothers with at least one child attending school.

Note: Underlined percentages indicate significant differences at the .01 level.

Significance test for education: chi square = 9.96; df = 2; p < .01

Significance test for AFDC: chi square = 6.49; df = 1; NS

Significance test for income: chi square = 8.78; df = 2; NS

Significance test for employment status: chi square = 8.89; df = 3; NS

Appendix Table D-6. AVERAGE SCORE ON BEHAVIORAL PROBLEM SCALE FOR CHILDREN BY SEX AND AGE^a

	ALL	SEX		AGE		
		GIRLS	BOYS	5-9	10-14	15-17
BEHAVIOR PROBLEM SCALE	(N=595)	(N=279)	(N=316)	(N=215)	(N=242)	(N=138)
Average (Mean)	8.39	8.04	8.70	7.76	8.45	9.25
S.D.	6.70	6.61	6.77	6.47	6.58	7.18

^a Children age 5 and older only

Note: Significance test for sex: $F = 1.42$; $df = 1, 593$; NS
Significance test for age: $F = 2.11$; $df = 2, 592$; NS

Appendix Table D-7. AVERAGE SCORE ON BEHAVIORAL PROBLEM SCALE BY PARENTS' RATINGS OF SCHOOL PERFORMANCE AND TROUBLE WITH SCHOOL BEHAVIOR^a

	ALL	SCHOOL PERFORMANCE RATED BELOW AVERAGE		TROUBLE WITH SCHOOL BEHAVIOR ^b	
		YES	NO	YES	NO
BEHAVIOR PROBLEM SCALE	(N=595)	(N=443)	(N=104)	(N=133)	(N=401)
Average (Mean)	8.33	12.14	7.43	15.20	6.42
S.D.	6.75	7.79	6.16	5.80	5.57

^a Children age 5 and older only who are attending school

^b Is the child having at least a moderate amount of trouble attending school or doing school work as necessary?

Note: Significance test for school performance: $F = 44.38$; $df = 1, 545$, $p < .0001$
 Significance test for school behavior: $F = 252.34$; $df = 1, 592$; $p < .0001$

CHILDREN FOR WHOM PARENTS HAD A SERIOUS CONCERN OVER EMOTIONAL OR BEHAVIORAL PROBLEMS IN THE PAST YEAR BY PARENTS' RATINGS OF SCHOOL PERFORMANCE AND TROUBLE WITH SCHOOL BEHAVIOR

Appendix Table D-8.

SERIOUS CONCERN EXPRESSED	ALL		SCHOOL PERFORMANCE RATED BELOW AVERAGE		TROUBLE WITH SCHOOL BEHAVIOR ^b	
	Number	Percent	YES	NO	YES	NO
			(N=106) Percent	(N=449) Percent	(N=128) Percent	(N=427) Percent
Yes	101	18.2	37.7	13.4	38.3	12.2
No	454	81.8	62.3	86.6	61.7	87.8
Total	555	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Children age 5 and older only who are attending school

Is the child having at least a moderate amount of trouble attending school or doing school work as necessary?

Note: Significance test for school performance: corrected chi square = 32.86; df = 1; p < .0001
Significance test for school behavior: corrected chi square = 43.34; df = 1; p < .0001

Appendix Table D-9.

ACTIONS TAKEN BY PARENTS WHO WERE CONCERNED ABOUT
EMOTIONAL OR BEHAVIORAL PROBLEMS OF ONE OR MORE OF
THEIR CHILDREN DURING THE PAST YEAR

TYPE OF ACTION	PERCENTAGE OF PARENTS WHO SOUGHT EACH TYPE (N=84) ^a
Sought help from mental health professional/ facility (e.g., psychologist, psychiatrist, child guidance clinic)	27.4
Talked to someone at child's school	26.2
Talked with child	19.0
Went for counseling (unspecified as to type)	10.7
Went to a health or medical facility (e.g., hospital, HMO)	6.0
Chemical dependency program	2.4
Sought help from the church	2.4
Talked with the absent parent	1.2
No response	1.2
Other type of action	10.7

^a Percentages add to more than 100 because parents could take more than one type of action.

PHYSICAL HEALTH PROBLEM BY SPECIAL EDUCATION FOR LEARNING PROBLEMS, TROUBLE WITH SCHOOL BEHAVIOR
Appendix Table D-10. AND PARENTS' RATINGS OF SCHOOL PERFORMANCE^a

PHYSICAL HEALTH PROBLEM ^b	ALL		IN SPECIAL EDUCATION FOR LEARNING PROBLEM		TROUBLE WITH SCHOOL BEHAVIOR ^c		SCHOOL PERFORMANCE RATED BELOW AVERAGE	
	Number	Percent	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
			(N=78) Percent	(N=474) Percent	(N=128) Percent	(N=427) Percent	(N=106) Percent	(N=446) Percent
Yes	34	6.1	14.1	4.6	12.5	4.2	11.3	4.9
No	521	93.9	85.9	95.4	87.5	95.8	88.7	95.1
Total	555	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

^a Children age 5 and older only who are attending school

^b Is the child having at least a moderate amount of trouble with poor physical health or with a physical handicap?

^c Is the child having at least a moderate amount of trouble attending school or doing school work as necessary?

Note: Significance test for special education: corrected chi square = 9.05; df = 1; p < .01

Significance test for school behavior: corrected chi square = 10.36; df = 1; p < .01

Significance test for school performance: corrected chi square = 4.99; df = 1; NS

Appendix Table D-11. AVERAGE SCORE ON PARENTING ROLE SCALE BY HAVING CHILDREN WITH BEHAVIORAL PROBLEMS AND HAVING CHILDREN WITH PHYSICAL HEALTH PROBLEMS: SINGLE MOTHERS ONLY^a

	ALL	AT LEAST ONE CHILD HAS BEHAVIORAL PROBLEM ^b		AT LEAST ONE CHILD HAS PHYSICAL HEALTH PROBLEM ^c	
		YES	NO	YES	NO
PARENTING ROLE SCALE	(N=303)	(N=74)	(N=229)	(N=33)	(N=269)
Average (Mean)	3.47	7.08	2.31	5.82	3.19
S.D.	3.47	3.40	2.58	4.22	3.26

^a Includes only mothers with at least one child aged 5 to 17.

^b Is there at least one child who has a score on the behavioral problem scale of one standard deviation or more above the scale mean?

^c Is there one or more children in the family having at least a moderate amount of trouble with poor physical health or with a physical handicap?

Note: Significance test for behavioral problem: $F = 163.07$; $df = 1, 301$; $p < .0001$
Significance test for physical health problem: $F = 17.76$; $df = 1, 300$; $p < .0001$

Appendix Table D-12. AVERAGE SCORE ON PARENTING ROLE SCALE BY PARENTS' RATING OF CHILDREN'S SCHOOL PERFORMANCE AND HAVING CHILDREN WITH SCHOOL BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS: SINGLE MOTHERS ONLY^a

	ALL	AT LEAST ONE CHILD RATED BELOW AVERAGE		AT LEAST ONE CHILD HAS SCHOOL BEHAVIOR PROBLEM ^b	
		YES	NO	YES	NO
PARENTING ROLE SCALE	(N=285)	(N=79)	(N=206)	(N=88)	(N=196)
Average (Mean)	3.50	5.62	2.69	6.00	2.39
S.D.	3.51	3.97	2.94	3.56	2.86

^a Includes only mothers with at least one child aged 5 to 17 attending school.

^b Is one or more child having at least a moderate amount of trouble attending school or doing school work as necessary?

Note: Significance test for school performance: $F = 46.20$; $df = 1, 283$; $p < .0001$
Significance test for school behavior: $F = 82.57$; $df = 1, 282$; $p < .0001$

APPENDIX E
SUPPLEMENTAL TABLES FOR CHAPTER FIVE

Appendix Table E-1. SINGLE MOTHERS WHERE MEDICAL CARE IS OBTAINED FOR SINGLE MOTHERS OR THEIR CHILDREN BY DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

	ALL		AGE			RACE		MARITAL STATUS				AGE OF YOUNGEST CHILD	
			16-24	25-34	35+	White	Other	Divorced	Never Married	Separated	Widowed	Ages 0-5	Ages 6-17
	(N=385)		(N=68)	(N=148)	(N=169)	(N=281)	(N=104)	(N=178)	(N=119)	(N=55)	(N=33)	(N=162)	(N=223)
	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
FAMILY DOCTOR OR OB/GYN^a													
Yes	188	48.8	38.2	49.3	52.7	53.7	35.6	55.6	39.5	43.6	54.5	46.9	50.2
No	197	51.2	61.8	50.7	47.3	46.3	64.4	44.4	60.5	56.4	45.5	53.1	49.8
Total	385	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
NEIGHBORHOOD CLINIC^a													
Yes	99	25.7	33.8	27.0	21.3	26.0	25.0	22.5	28.6	36.4	15.2	27.2	24.7
No	286	74.3	66.2	73.0	78.7	74.0	75.0	77.5	71.4	63.6	84.8	72.8	75.3
Total	385	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
PREPAID HEALTH CARE (HMO)^a													
Yes	62	16.1	8.8	16.9	18.3	17.4	12.5	19.7	11.8	12.7	18.2	9.9	20.6
No	323	83.9	91.2	83.1	81.7	82.6	87.5	80.3	88.2	87.3	81.8	90.1	79.4
Total	385	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
HOSPITAL OUTPATIENT DEPARTMENT^a													
Yes	70	18.2	27.9	21.6	11.2	12.1	34.6	9.6	28.6	23.6	18.2	25.9	12.6
No	315	81.8	72.1	78.4	88.8	87.9	65.4	90.4	71.4	76.4	81.8	74.1	87.4
Total	385	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

^a Was the source of care used by the mother either for herself or for her children?

Note: Underlined percentages indicate significant differences at the .01 level.

Family Doctor

Significance test for age: chi square = 4.06, df = 2, NS
 Significance test for race: corrected chi square = 9.30, df = 1, p = .01
 Significance test for marital status: chi square = 8.46, df = 3, NS
 Significance test for age of youngest child: corrected chi square = .29, df = 1, NS

Neighborhood Clinic

Significance test for age: chi square = 4.20, df = 2, NS
 Significance test for race: corrected chi square = .00, df = 1, NS
 Significance test for marital status: chi square = 6.68, df = 3, NS
 Significance test for age of youngest child: corrected chi square = .19, df = 1, NS

Prepaid Health Care

Significance test for age: chi square = 3.36, df = 2, NS
 Significance test for race: corrected chi square = 1.03, df = 1, NS
 Significance test for marital status: chi square = 3.90, df = 3, NS
 Significance test for age of youngest child: corrected chi square = 7.25, df = 1, p = .01

Hospital Outpatient

Significance test for age: chi square = 11.00, df = 1, p = .01
 Significance test for race: corrected chi square = 24.38, df = 1, p = .0001
 Significance test for marital status: chi square = 18.65, df = 3, p = .001
 Significance test for age of youngest child: corrected chi square = 10.19, df = 1, p = .01

Appendix Table E-2. SINGLE MOTHERS WHERE MEDICAL CARE IS OBTAINED FOR SINGLE MOTHERS OR THEIR CHILDREN BY ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS AND EDUCATION

TABLE 1. PATIENTS WHOSE MEDICAL COSTS WERE OBTAINED FOR STUDY PURPOSES															
	ALL		EMPLOYMENT STATUS					RECEIVES AFDC		INCOME			EDUCATION (AGE 25 AND OVER)		
			Full-time	Part-time	Unemployed	Out of Labor Force	Yes	No	Less than \$8,000	\$8,000-\$14,000	\$14,000 or more	Less Than High School	High School Graduate	College Graduate	
	(N=385) Number	Percent	(N=156) Percent	(N=48) Percent	(N=14) Percent	(N=144) Percent	(N=201) Percent	(N=184) Percent	(N=188) Percent	(N=83) Percent	(N=110) Percent	(N=63) Percent	(N=159) Percent	(N=95) Percent	
FAMILY DOCTOR OR OB/GYN ^a															
Yes	188	48.8	49.4	64.6	50.0	41.7	42.8	55.4	43.1	49.4	58.2	36.5	57.9	49.5	
No	197	51.2	50.6	35.4	50.0	58.3	57.2	44.6	56.9	50.6	41.8	63.5	42.1	50.5	
Total	385	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	
NEIGHBORHOOD CLINIC ^a															
Yes	99	25.7	18.6	22.9	17.6	36.8	33.3	17.4	30.9	31.3	12.7	25.4	24.5	22.1	
No	286	74.3	81.4	77.1	82.4	63.2	66.7	82.6	69.1	68.7	87.3	74.6	75.5	77.9	
Total	385	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	
PREPAID HEALTH CARE (HMO) ^a															
Yes	62	16.1	30.1	14.6	8.8	3.5	3.5	29.9	6.4	19.3	30.9	25.4	24.5	22.1	
No	323	83.9	69.9	85.4	91.2	96.5	96.5	70.1	93.6	80.7	69.1	74.6	75.5	77.9	
Total	385	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	
HOSPITAL OUTPATIENT DEPARTMENT ^a															
Yes	70	18.2	7.7	2.1	26.5	33.3	30.3	4.9	27.7	12.0	6.4	38.1	12.6	7.4	
No	315	81.8	92.3	97.9	73.5	66.7	69.7	95.1	72.3	88.0	93.6	61.9	87.4	92.6	
Total	385	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	

^a Was the source of care used by the mother either for herself or for her children?

Note: Underlined percentages indicate significant differences at the .01 level.

Family Doctor

Significance test for employment status: chi square = 7.74, df = 3; NS
Significance test for AFDC: corrected chi square = 5.66, df = 1; NS
Significance test for income: chi square = 6.34, df = 2; NS
Significance test for education: chi square = 8.38, df = 2; NS

Neighborhood Clinic

Significance test for employment status: chi square = 14.69, df = 3; p = .01
Significance test for AFDC: corrected chi square = 11.96, df = 1; p = .001
Significance test for income: chi square = 13.67, df = 2; p = .01
Significance test for education: chi square = .28, df = 2; NS

Prepaid Health Care

Significance test for employment status: chi square = 40.87, df = 3; p = .0001
Significance test for AFDC: corrected chi square = 47.65, df = 1; p = .0001
Significance test for income: chi square = 31.34, df = 2; p = .0001
Significance test for education: chi square = .28, df = 2; NS

Hospital Outpatient

Significance test for employment status: chi square = 43.42, df = 3; p = .0001
Significance test for AFDC: corrected chi square = 40.15, df = 1; p = .0001
Significance test for income: chi square = 23.85, df = 2; p = .0001
Significance test for education: chi square = 29.40, df = 2; p = .0001

Appendix Table E-3. SINGLE MOTHERS: HOW SINGLE MOTHERS PAY FOR MEDICAL SERVICES FOR THEMSELVES OR THEIR CHILDREN BY DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

	ALL		AGE			RACE		MARITAL STATUS				AGE OF YOUNGEST CHILD	
			16-24	25-34	35+	White	Other	Divorced	Never Married	Separated	Widowed	Ages 0-5	Ages 6-17
	(N=387)		(N=68)	(N=148)	(N=171)	(N=282)	(N=105)	(N=179)	(N=119)	(N=55)	(N=34)	(N=167)	(N=225)
	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
MEDICAL ASSISTANCE^a													
Yes	211	54.5	86.8	58.1	38.6	46.1	77.1	40.8	79.8	58.2	32.4	75.9	39.1
No	176	45.5	13.2	41.9	61.4	53.9	22.9	59.2	20.2	41.8	67.6	24.1	60.9
Total	387	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
PREPAID HEALTH PLAN (HMO)^a													
Yes	77	19.9	7.4	20.9	24.0	22.7	12.4	24.0	12.6	20.0	23.5	11.7	25.8
No	310	80.1	92.6	79.1	76.0	77.3	87.6	76.0	87.4	80.0	76.5	88.3	74.2
Total	387	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
PRIVATE HEALTH INSURANCE^a													
Yes	70	18.1	2.9	15.5	26.3	21.6	8.6	22.3	7.6	23.6	23.5	10.5	23.6
No	317	81.9	97.1	84.5	73.7	78.4	91.4	77.7	92.4	76.4	76.5	89.5	76.4
Total	387	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
CASH^a													
Yes	68	17.6	8.8	18.2	20.5	22.3	4.8	26.3	8.4	5.5	23.5	10.5	22.7
No	319	82.4	91.2	81.8	79.5	77.7	95.2	73.7	91.6	94.5	76.5	89.5	77.3
Total	387	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

^a Was the means of payment used by the mother either for herself or for her children?

Note: Underlined percentages indicate significant differences at the .01 level.

Medical Assistance

Significance test for age: chi square = 46.77, df = 2, p < .001
 Significance test for race: corrected chi square = 28.50, df = 1, p < .0001
 Significance test for marital status: chi square = 51.41, df = 3, p < .0001
 Significance test for age of youngest child: corrected chi square = 50.01, df = 1, p < .0001

Prepaid Health Plan

Significance test for age: chi square = 8.60, df = 2, NS
 Significance test for race: corrected chi square = 4.48, df = 1, NS
 Significance test for marital status: chi square = 6.16, df = 3, NS
 Significance test for age of youngest child: corrected chi square = 10.80, df = 1, p < .01

Private Health Insurance

Significance test for age: chi square = 18.99, df = 2, p < .001
 Significance test for race: corrected chi square = 7.95, df = 1, p < .01
 Significance test for marital status: chi square = 12.91, df = 3, p < .01
 Significance test for age of youngest child: corrected chi square = 9.98, df = 1, p < .01

Cash

Significance test for age: chi square = 4.63, df = 2, NS
 Significance test for race: corrected chi square = 15.13, df = 1, p < .001
 Significance test for marital status: chi square = 22.64, df = 3, p < .001
 Significance test for age of youngest child: corrected chi square = 8.81, df = 1, p < .01

Appendix Table E-4. SINGLE MOTHERS: HOW SINGLE MOTHERS PAY FOR MEDICAL SERVICES FOR THEMSELVES OR THEIR CHILDREN BY ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS AND EDUCATION

	ALL		EMPLOYMENT STATUS					RECEIVES AFDC		INCOME			EDUCATION (AGE 25 AND OVER)		
			Full-time	Part-time	Unemployed	Out of Labor Force	Yes	No	Less than \$8,000	\$8,000- \$14,000	\$14,000 or more	Less than High School	High School Graduate	College Graduate	
	(N=387)	(N=156)	(N=48)	(N=34)	(N=146)	(N=203)	(N=184)	(N=190)	(N=83)	(N=110)	(N=64)	(N=160)	(N=95)		
	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent		
MEDICAL ASSISTANCE ^a															
Yes	211	54.5	11.5	52.1	79.4	95.2	98.0	6.5	89.5	37.3	7.3	78.1	50.6	22.1	
No	176	45.5	88.5	47.9	20.6	4.8	2.0	93.5	10.5	62.7	92.7	21.9	49.4	77.9	
Total	387	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	
PREPAID HEALTH PLAN (HMO) ^a															
Yes	77	19.9	40.4	14.6	5.9	3.4	2.5	39.1	4.7	31.3	38.2	15.6	18.1	34.7	
No	310	80.1	59.6	85.4	94.1	96.6	97.5	60.9	95.3	68.7	61.8	84.4	81.9	65.3	
Total	387	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	
PRIVATE HEALTH INSURANCE ^a															
Yes	70	18.1	36.5	20.8	8.8	0.0	0.5	37.5	2.6	19.3	44.5	3.1	21.9	32.6	
No	317	81.9	63.5	79.2	91.2	100.0	99.5	62.5	97.4	80.7	55.5	96.9	78.1	67.4	
Total	387	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	
CASH ^a															
Yes	68	17.6	26.9	29.2	17.6	3.4	1.5	35.3	7.9	26.5	26.4	6.3	19.4	28.4	
No	319	82.4	73.1	70.8	82.4	96.6	98.5	64.7	92.1	73.5	73.6	93.7	80.6	71.6	
Total	387	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	

^a was the means of payment used by the mother either for herself or for her children?

Note: Underlined percentages indicate significant differences at the .01 level.

Medical Assistance

Significance test for employment status: chi square = 222.23, df = 3, p < .0001
 Significance test for AFDC: corrected chi square = 322.27, df = 1, p < .0001
 Significance test for income: chi square = 202.55, df = 2, p < .0001
 Significance test for education: chi square = 49.25, df = 2, p < .0001

Prepaid Health Plan

Significance test for employment status: chi square = 70.56, df = 3, p < .0001
 Significance test for AFDC: corrected chi square = 79.14, df = 1, p < .0001
 Significance test for income: chi square = 56.82, df = 2, p < .0001
 Significance test for education: chi square = 11.62, df = 2, p < .01

Private Health Insurance

Significance test for employment status: chi square = 69.87, df = 3, p < .0001
 Significance test for AFDC: corrected chi square = 86.74, df = 1, p < .0001
 Significance test for income: chi square = 82.01, df = 2, p < .0001
 Significance test for education: chi square = 19.91, df = 2, p < .0001

Cash

Significance test for employment status: chi square = 34.23, df = 3, p < .0001
 Significance test for AFDC: corrected chi square = 74.03, df = 1, p < .0001
 Significance test for income: chi square = 23.05, df = 2, p < .0001
 Significance test for education: chi square = 12.01, df = 2, p < .01

APPENDIX F
SUPPLEMENTAL TABLES FOR CHAPTER SEVEN

Appendix Table F-1. LIVING ARRANGEMENTS BY SEX OF PARENT

	Fathers	Mothers
	(N=96)	(N=386)
	Percent	Percent
Minor children	78.1	69.2
Minor and older children	11.5	10.1
Parents/Grandparents	4.2	7.0
Other relatives	2.1	9.6
Friends, non-relatives	4.2	4.1
Total	100.0	100.0

Note: Significance test for sex (children only vs. other adult present): corrected chi square = 4.72;
df = 1; NS

Appendix Table F-2. AGES OF CHILDREN AT HOME BY SEX OF PARENT

	Children of Fathers	Children of Mothers
	(N=155)	(N=723)
	Percent	Percent
Less than 1 year	0.6	1.8
1	0.6	4.1
2	0.6	5.3
3	3.2	5.7
4	5.8	6.4
5	6.5	4.8
6	6.5	6.5
7	4.5	5.7
8	7.7	5.8
9	4.5	5.5
10	6.5	6.1
11	7.7	5.9
12	6.5	6.6
13	11.0	7.1
14	4.5	5.8
15	7.7	5.0
16	7.1	7.9
17	8.4	4.0
Total	100.0	100.0

Note: Significance test for age: (children of fathers: mean = 10.5; S.D. = 4.4 vs. children of mothers: mean = 9.0; S.D. = 4.9):
 $F = 11.06$; $df = 1, 876$; $p < .001$

Appendix Table F-3. SUPPLEMENTAL CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS FOR CHILDREN AGES 12 OR YOUNGER BY SEX OF PARENT (MULTIPLE RESPONSES INCLUDED)

	Fathers	Mothers
	<u>Percent of 74 Children</u>	<u>Percent of 189 Children</u>
Care in relative's home	18.9	15.9
Care in child's home with non-relative	13.5	10.6
Care in child's home with relative	12.2	13.2
Care in non-relative's home	6.8	10.1
Preschool	1.4	4.3
Care in other parent's home	1.4	2.1
Group care center	1.4	0.0
Licensed family home	0.0	1.1
Primary school activities	0.0	0.5
Latch key program	0.0	0.5